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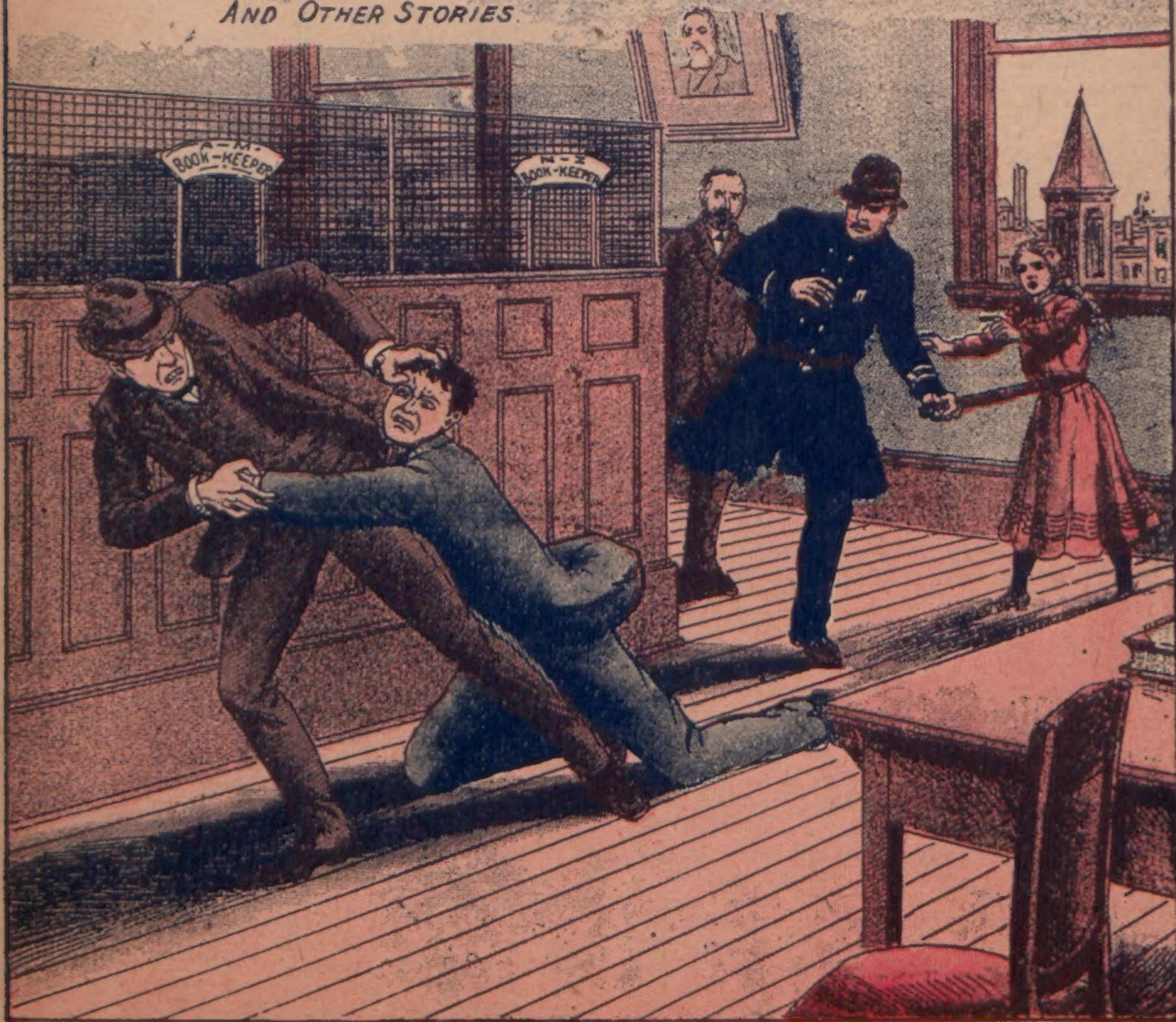
MAY 30, 1924

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STORIES OF
BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

THE LADDER OF FAME;
OR, FROM OFFICE BOY TO SENATOR, *By A SELF-MADE MAN*
AND OTHER STORIES



Redmond, white with fury, struck the boy a heavy blow in the face, knocking him down, and attempted a dash for the door. Stanton, however, recovered himself in time to grasp the rascal around the waist, and a desperate struggle ensued.

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No. 974

NEW YORK, MAY 30, 1924

THE LADDER OF FAME

OR, FROM OFFICE BOY TO SENATOR

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—George Stanton Takes Mr. Deering to Coffin Island.

"It's an awful night to go upon the water, George," said Mrs. Stanton, as she glanced at the windows, the loose sashes of which were beating a tattoo against the frame.

"I know it is a bad night, mother," replied her stalwart, good-looking son, whose age was probably seventeen; "but I've been afloat in many a worse one."

"Your poor father lost his life in just such a blow while going down the harbor to his vessels," said the little widow, wiping a tear from her eye; "and he was more at home on the water than you."

"Don't be afraid. Nothing will happen to me. I know the bay like a book, and the Gull is a stiff, weatherly boat."

Mrs. Stanton shook her head as if she was not convinced.

"But we need the money, mother," went on her son. "We need it very badly. The gentleman has offered me ten dollars to carry him over to the island and back again. Remember his brother is dying and may not live until morning. There seems to be no other way for him to reach the island except I take him in my boat. He told me that he hasn't seen his brother since they were boys together, and that was a long time ago. In fact, he hadn't heard from him in many years. His brother is the black sheep of the family, who ran away to sea. For some years he's been keeper of the Coffin Island Light, but he never communicated with his family until he was taken ill, and being told he could not live more than a day or two, he had a dispatch sent to his only brother, the gentleman who is in the sitting-room below, asking him to come at once to the lighthouse on Coffin Island if he wished to see him before he died. The gentleman arrived at the inn in the village half an hour ago and inquired for an experienced boatman to take him over to the island. Mr. Bates sent him to me. That's about the whole story."

"Well, my son, I suppose under these exceptional circumstances, I must let you go," said Mrs. Stanton, with another fearful look at the shaking windows. "But you will be very careful, won't you? Remember I shall not sleep a wink until you come back."

"Don't be so foolish, mother," remonstrated the boy. "It is not likely we will return to-night. The gale will have probably blown itself out by morning, and then when you see the sun shining on the glistening waters you will laugh at your present fears. Just think what a windfall ten dollars will be to us!"

"Be sure and dress yourself warm before you go, George."

"Yes, mother," and the robust, bronzed-featured lad hurried downstairs to tell his caller that his mother had consented to his daring the dangers of Boston Bay in order to land him on Coffin Island that night.

"Will it be long before you start?" asked the gentleman.

"No, sir, I will be ready to go in a very few minutes," said George Stanton.

"I am glad to hear it," replied the visitor, who was a fine-looking man of about forty-five, and who said his name was Howard Deering.

Leaving the stranger once more alone in the cozy little sitting-room of the humble cottage owned and occupied by Mrs. Stanton and her son, George hastened to his room to put on his sea rig, and after a very short interval returned to the room, after kissing his mother good-by, with an oilcloth coat under his arm and a fisherman's hat in his hand.

"All ready, sir," he said.

Mr. Deering rose from the rocker and followed the sturdy boy out into the inclement night.

The cottage was on the outskirts of Shoreham Village, a thriving little place situated upon one of the arms of the sea connected with Boston Bay. The waters of the bay laved the shore within a hundred feet of the back gate, and there, moored securely to a small landing stage, lay the stout catboat Gull.

During the summer George, besides taking care of the ground about the house, contrived to earn a few dollars doing odd jobs about the village and by taking the summer boarders in that locality, whose tastes inclined in that direction, out sailing or fishing in the Gull. As he and Mr. Deering walked down to the landing-stage they both realized that it was an awful night to go upon the water; but the boy had weathered some heavy gales on the bay before, and he was satisfied he

could keep the Gull right side up in anything save perhaps an out-and-out hurricane. Mr. Deering, with a pardonable nervousness, questioned the young skipper of the Gull in regard to the boat in which they were to venture upon the stormy bay and the dangers they would encounter on their trip to Coffin Island.

George's replies were so satisfactory that the gentleman felt his courage rise to the occasion though he would not have undertaken the watery passage but for the serious errand he was engaged upon. Mr. Deering showed that he was not much used to boats and salt water by the gingerly way he essayed to step into the cock-pit of the sailboat as she rose and then fell away under the action of the heaving waves. George saw that he was likely to lose his balance if he stepped down at the wrong moment, so he took him by the arm and assisted him in.

"Thank you, my lad. I'm rather a novice at this business," said Mr. Deering with a smile.

The young skipper pulled aside the sliding door to the cuddy and invited his passenger to enter and thus protect himself from the cold wind and dashing spray. Mr. Deering thought the young skipper's advice good, and he retired out of sight. George, enveloped in his oilskin, with his sou'wester pulled well down over his eyes, sat on the weather side of the tiller peering forward into the night. The boat breasted the big waves like a mass of solid oak, and, though the spray dashed furiously over her as she leaped over the angry billows, George Stanton felt as safe in her as he would in the kitchen of his mother's cottage.

The wind was east and the sky was overcast, which made the night exceedingly gloomy and dark. On flew the Gull till the receding of a curving point of land, which somewhat sheltered Shoreham village from the full sweep of the Atlantic winds, opened up the bright glow of the Coffin Island light—a stationary white light. The young skipper headed directly for it. As the minutes flew by, if there was any change in the weather it was for the worse.

"This is a tough night," the boy muttered to himself, "a good bit worse than I had calculated on. I guess it's worth all of \$20 to go off to Coffin Island on such a night. Still, if the mast holds, and I don't see why it shouldn't, we'll get there all right."

Through it all the stanch little boat pushed her nose seaward, gradually nearing their destination. The island loomed larger and larger ahead, and the bright gleaming shaft of light grew bigger and brighter through the steaming atmosphere. At last the boat was sheltered from the fierceness of the blast under a bluff, and soon afterward came into the comparatively still water of a little cove, where a small wharf, the only landing place on the island, projected to the west. By the exercise of the same good judgment which had enabled him to bring the little craft in safety through the darkness and storm to her destination, George Stanton laid the Gull alongside the wharf and secured her.

Mr. Deering had come to the entrance of the cuddy as soon as he was sensible of the easier motion of the boat, and was therefore all ready to step on shore.

"Now, sir, you may come out, and I'll help you on the wharf," said the boy.

His passenger eagerly obeyed his summons.

"You have done well, my boy," he said, grasping George's hand. "I doubt if any boatman alive could have done better. I am very grateful to you."

Then they stepped up on the wharf and started for the gray walls of the lighthouse, which rose through the driving rain a few yards distant.

CHAPTER II.—The Red Pocketbook.

As Mr. Deering walked up to the door to knock, George Stanton glanced in through one of the windows on the ground floor. He saw a young, ill-favored looking man standing by a stove with a red pocketbook in his hand, the contents of which he seemed to be investigating with eager attention. Just then Mr. Deering knocked loudly. George saw the man inside give a violent start and conceal the wallet in the breast of his shirt while he turned a startled look at the door. George Stanton, whose attention was fascinated by the curious suspicious movement of the man inside, saw him stoop suddenly and thrust the red pocketbook under an empty keg which stood against the circular wall and then come forward to the door. He reached it just as Mr. Deering knocked for the third time, somewhat impatiently. The man opened the door a few inches.

"Who's there, and what do you want on the island at this hour?" he asked in a surly tone.

"I am Rodney Deering's brother Howard, and I have come from Boston in answer to a telegraphic message that he was ill unto death and wanted to see me," replied Mr. Deering.

The man, apparently the assistant lightkeeper, opened the door grudgingly and permitted the visitor, with George at his heels, to enter the lighthouse.

"Is my brother still alive?" Mr. Deering asked eagerly.

The man nodded.

"Thank heaven for that," said the gentleman, fervently.

"He is asleep at present," the man said, watching his visitors with a shifty eye, which the observing young skipper of the Gull did not much fancy.

"Are you the assistant keeper?"

"I am."

"Your name is——"

"Jim Redmond."

"Redmond!" exclaimed Mr. Deering. "I have a clerk in my employ named Redmond—Philip Redmond. Is he——"

"He is my brother," replied the assistant keeper, without manifesting any particular interest in the matter.

"Ah, indeed. I was not aware he had a brother. He never mentioned that fact to me. I am glad to know you, sir. I will go upstairs, if you will pilot the way."

Jim Redmond hesitated a moment.

Redmond, however, saw that he could not well refuse to show the visitor upstairs, so he reluctantly led the way up the circular iron stair-

way which communicated with the upper regions of the lighthouse. George could hear the footsteps of the two men on the floor above, and then there was silence. Some strange fascination drew the boy nearer to the keg which hid the wallet.

"I have no right to be so interested in this matter," he exclaimed impatiently. "Probably there is nothing in it. Only a freak of my imagination. And yet——"

His eyes sought the floor around the keg. A tiny rim of red projected from under it, showing that in his haste Redmond had not wholly hidden the pocketbook. No one, however, would have noticed this unless, like the lad, he had seen what had occurred at the moment after Howard Deering knocked on the lighthouse door. Stanton thrust his hands into his pocket and started to walk to the window to look out into the night; but he hesitated and looked at the keg once more.

"I can't stand this," he breathed at last. "I must have a look at that wallet."

With the alertness of a person who was afraid of being caught in a mean act, George knelt down, lifted the end of the keg and drew out the pocketbook. The first thing he noticed was the name "Rodney Deering" stamped in gilt letters across the flap.

"It is the sick man's pocketbook, after all," he whispered. "Jim Redmond seems to be a thief."

George undid the flap and looked into the book. It contained a number of bills—probably \$100 in all—and several papers. The boy looked through each compartment until he came to the last. Here he saw a piece of parchment, yellow with age. It had such a curious look that George drew it out to examine it. At that moment he heard the heavy boots of Redmond on the iron stairs coming down.

It was too late then to replace the time-worn document, so he snatched it from the plank and thrust it into his pocket just as Redmond's head appeared below the level of the ceiling. Whether the lightkeeper's assistant had seen the action or not Stanton could not say, but he certainly regarded the lad with a good deal of suspicion when he stepped into the room. He made no remark, however, but went over and sat down on the keg, which he regarded for a moment attentively to see if it had been moved. Possibly satisfied that it had not been disturbed, he took out his pipe and a package of smoking tobacco and started to fill his pipe.

"It's a rough night," he growled out at last, feeling called on to say something.

"Yes," answered the young boatman, "one of the roughest I've ever been out in."

"Are you a boatman?"

"I might be considered as such, and I might not. I own a catboat, in which I often take people out sailing and fishing on the bay. I wouldn't have ventured here on such a night as this only that Mr. Deering was afraid his brother might die before morning, and he was very anxious to see him alive."

"He won't live till mornin'," replied Jim Redmond gloomily. "He's most gone now."

"That's too bad," said Stanton, in a sympathetic tone.

"I dunno," answered the man meditatively. "It will probably be a good thing for his little girl."

"His little girl!" ejaculated George, in a tone of some surprise.

"Yes," nodded Redmond. "He has a daughter about fourteen years old. His brother, who is well off, I understand—a Boston merchant—will look after her, I uess."

"Where is she?" asked the boy, interestedly.

Redmond jerked his thumb upward as if to intimate that she was upstairs with her dying father.

"Her mother——" began George.

"Dead these ten years," replied Redmond, blowing out a cloud of smoke.

"How long has Rodney Deering been on this island?"

"Six years. Three as assistant and three as head keeper."

"What is the nature of his illness?"

"A kind of quick consumption. Caught a bad cold four months ago, and it's fetched him."

Judging from the speaker's manner, he did not seem to be particularly distressed by his comrade's misfortune. At that instant there was heard the soul-stirring cry of a man above; a moment of silence and then a poignant girlish wail floated down to them.

"What was that?" asked the boy, almost knowing what the answer would be.

"That!" replied Redmond, recovering himself. "That was Flossie's voice. He's gone, I reckon."

CHAPTER III.—"I'll Have Your Life!"

Jim Redmond was right. Rodney Deering was dead after a largely misspent life. Not that he had been a bad man; no, only headstrong and impatient of restraint. He had left home when quite young, after a quarrel with his father, and from that day until the hour he telegraphed his condition to his brother Howard at Boston no word had ever been received from him. For some years he was regarded as having passed out of this life; but this impression was not correct. Just why he had refused to divulge his whereabouts to his family even after he got his position on Coffin Island, in Boston Bay, was a puzzle he did not explain up to the moment his breath failed him forever. He seemed to be glad to see his brother when Howard Deering's coming awoke him from his last sleep on earth. What he had to say, however, during those few precious moments yet remaining to him, had reference entirely to his daughter Flossie, who knelt in tearful sorrow by his cot, watching the sable pinions of the Angel of Death close in about her only living parent. The one soft spot in Rodney Deering's heart was filled with his only child. In all probability he would have died without giving a sign of his existence to his family but for her. The certainty of his death brought the problem of her future before him so he sent for his brother Howard. And Howard in answer to his eager appeal promised to care for the girl as if she was his own.

"She is not penniless," whispered the dying man, a strange light in his eyes. "No, no; not

penniless. You will find in my red pocketbook—I have it here,” and he tore open his shirt and searched with a feverish eagerness for the wallet that Jim Redmond had stolen from him while he was asleep and Flossie’s attention was diverted.

He could not find it, and his excitement grew intense. Every fiber of his attenuated frame trembled. Howard tried to calm him, but he might as well have tried to still the storm that tore around the lighthouse.

“Where is it?” he almost shrieked. “Where is it—Flossie’s treasure? My heavens! I have been robbed, and by——”

Before he could frame the name of the thief a racking cough seized upon him. He struggled like a madman with it. Then a gush of blood started from his lips, he waved his hands wildly in the air, gasped and fell back—dead. Flossie, with a heartrending cry of grief, threw herself upon her father’s body and sobbed as if her little heart would break. Howard closed his brother’s glazing eyes, and then tried to comfort the orphan girl, who thenceforth was to live with him. But what words can alleviate such a sorrow as hers at its acute stage? It must take its course, and so until the gray dawn lighted up the eastern sky Flossie was unconsolable. Then exhausted nature came to her relief and she closed her eyes in sleep. Soon after George Stanton became aware that Rodney Deering was really dead he began to feel tired and sleepy. He went to the window and looked out. The rain had stopped and the gale seemed to be breaking up.

“Mr. Deering won’t want to return before morning,” he thought. “I may as well go down to the boat and turn in for the rest of the night.”

So he told Jim Redmond to tell Howard Deering that he could be found on board his sailboat at the wharf. The assistant keeper nodded and seemed to be relieved at the idea of the boy leaving the lighthouse. George put on his sou’wester, took his oilskins under his arm and left the place. Curiosity, however, induced him to glance through the window when he got on the outside. Jim Redmond still sat on the keg smoking his pipe, his eyes glued on the door. At length he got up, tilted the keg and took up the red pocketbook. He looked cautiously all about the room before he opened it. Eagerly he examined each of the compartments until he came to the last, which he found to be empty. He stared at it in a dumfounded kind of way for several moments, then he threw the wallet on the floor with an angry oath and sprang to his feet. Stanton waited to see no more.

“It must be the bit of parchment I have in my pocket, that he is after,” he said to himself, in an eager whisper. “What earthly use can he have for an old time-stained bit of paper? I must examine it at the earliest chance and see if I can find in it the key to his anxiety to possess it. At any rate, I am glad I have it, for if it has any value it is now Flossie Deering’s right to benefit by it.”

He thrust his hand into his pocket, where he had put it, and drew it forth.

“I’ll place it for safety in my wallet.”

He took out a small well-worn black pocket-

book, removed the rubber band and placed the bit of parchment inside.

“I’ll look at it in the morning,” he said, as he started to return the wallet to his pocket.

His hand struck on his hip and the pocketbook flew downward and disappeared in a crevice in the rocks.

“What shall I do now?” he asked himself, not a little dismayed. “It would be fierce if I should not be able to recover my pocketbook with that parchment. Who knows but it might represent a fortune for Rodney Deering’s daughter. I must mark the spot somehow and come back here after it in the morning.”

He gathered a heap of stones together and made a little mound. Then he took accurate bearing of the spot and stepped on the wharf, which was close at hand, to go to his boat. An hour afterward a man slouched past that little mound of stones, and stalking stealthily across the wharf stepped on board the Gull. This man was Jim Redmond. Putting his ear to the cuddy entrance, which was partially open, he listened. Seemingly satisfied with the state of things, he pushed the slide wholly back and softly entered the little cabin. He glided to the bunk where George Stanton lay in a tired sleep and noted his deep breathing with great satisfaction. Then he took up his clothes, article by article, and searched them carefully, but whatever he was in search of did not seem to present itself.

The young boatman moved uneasily in his sleep and the man drew back into the deeper shadows of the cuddy. Stanton, however, did not awake, and Redmond continued his useless search.

“Blame him!” he cried at last. “What has he done with it?”

The words aroused the boy and he sat up. His sharp eyes showed him that he was not alone.

“Who’s there?” he demanded, reaching out and grasping the intruder by the sleeve of his jacket.

“I’m here,” replied Redmond, drawing a clasp knife from his pocket and opening it with his teeth.

“Who are you, Redmond?”

“Yes. Jim Redmond.”

“And what do you want here in the cabin of my boat?”

“What do I want? I want that piece of parchment which you took from the red pocketbook I hid under that keg on the ground floor of the lighthouse. Give it up, or by heavens, I’ll have your life!” and he pressed the blade of his knife against the lad’s throat.

CHAPTER IV.—Stanton Steals a March on Redmond.

“I haven’t any piece of parchment,” protested George.

“You can’t lie out of it, young fellow. You looked in at the window, saw me hide the wallet under that keg, and when I went upstairs with Deering you took advantage of my absence to take that wallet out from under the keg and examine it.”

“You seem to know all about it.”

“I do.”

"All right, then, have it your own way."

"Hand over that parchment," hissed Redmond.

"How can I hand over what I haven't got?"

Redmond found that he wasn't accomplishing much, and he was furious. He was satisfied in his own mind that Stanton knew where the precious piece of parchment was, and he was determined to make him own up. Just then Howard Deering stepped aboard the boat and poked his head in at the cabin door. As it was pitch dark in the cuddy he couldn't see anything, but it seemed as if something strange was going on in there—something like a struggle between two persons. He took a match safe out of his pocket and struck a light. He was astonished at the sight which met his view. George Stanton, in very scant attire, was trying to hold his own against Redmond, who was fully dressed.

"What does this mean?" asked Mr. Deering, lighting a second match.

His words and presence caused a cessation of the conflict. Stanton let go of his aggressor and squirmed out of his reach.

"I'll get square with you yet, my young boatman," hissed Redmond, satisfied that he could do nothing more just then toward getting his hands on the coveted piece of parchment. "You haven't seen the last of this thing by a jugful."

With those words he brushed by Deering, pushed his way out of the cabin and left the boat.

"What's the trouble, my lad?" asked the Boston merchant, after he had watched Redmond retire from the cuddy.

"The trouble is that I woke up to find that fellow in here rummaging around the place. He came after a bit of parchment which he says I took from a red pocketbook he had hidden under a keg in the ground floor room of the lighthouse."

"A red pocketbook!" exclaimed Mr. Deering, recalling his brother's dying words. "The last words my brother spoke referred to a red pocketbook on which he seemed to place great value. He was going to show it to me, when, not finding it on his person, where he evidently had been accustomed to keep it, he frantically declared he had been robbed by some one whose name he was unable to mention on account of a violent spell of coughing, which ended in his death."

"The thief was Jim Redmond, the man who just left this boat."

"Then he must be made to yield it up, since everything that belonged to Rodney is now the rightful property of his daughter Flossie."

"If you will listen, sir, I will tell you how I came to know that Redmond had possession of the red pocketbook."

"Certainly I will listen to you."

Thereupon Stanton told Howard Deering all that the reader is familiar with in respect to the stolen wallet up to the moment George placed the piece of parchment in his own pocketbook and then accidentally let it fall into the hole among the rocks. Deering was not only interested, but somewhat excited over the recital. A slight noise at the opening of the cabin caused Stanton and Mr. Deering to turn their eyes in that direction, and just in time to see a dark object, which they knew must be the head of Jim Redmond, draw away from it.

"The rascal has been spying on us, and he has probably heard every word of our conversation," said George, in a tone of disgust. "I doubt if it will do him much good, so far as getting on the track of the lost parchment, for I did not mention the exact spot where I dropped my own wallet. The best thing you can do is to demand your brother's wallet, containing the money, from him. I am a witness to the fact that he has it. Should he refuse to turn it over to you you can threaten him with arrest."

"I will do that; but he may defy me. I shall have to remain on the island while you go to the village, notify the government authorities of the death of my brother and bring over an undertaker to take charge of his remains. The rascal may make his escape in a boat while you are away."

Morning was now beginning to dawn, so the young boatman put on his clothes, as further sleep was out of the question. Mr. Deering said he would have to return to the lighthouse to look after his niece. After he had gone, Stanton sat on top of the boat's half-deck and watched the sky lighten up. By this time the gale had blown itself out. The water of the bay, however, was still very much agitated, and dashed quite noisily upon the rocky shore of the island. The sky was fairly clear of clouds and promised a fine day. George looked around for some sign of Redmond, but he was not to be seen.

He unmoored the Gull from the wharf before he saw Redmond running rapidly down the rocks. As soon as the rascal struck the wharf he saw that the young boatman had escaped him, and so he stopped and shook his fist at him, shouting out some words that the boy could not understand.

George paid no attention to the fellow, but laid his course direct for Shoreham village, hidden behind a distant point of land.

CHAPTER V.—Redmond Scores a Point.

The young boatman made good time on his return trip and reached the landing-stage in front of his home a little after seven o'clock. His mother was up and watching for him. With the aid of her husband's eyeglass, she had made out the Gull soon after she rounded the point, and she then hastened to get breakfast on the table, for she guessed George would have an uncommonly good appetite that morning. She also noticed that the passenger he had carried to the island was not visible in the cockpit, so she judged he had remained at the lighthouse.

"Well, mother," her son said in his usual cheery tone, as he entered the kitchen, "you see I'm back all right."

"And I thank heaven that you are, my boy. I am sure that you found it a very rough night on the water."

"It was, indeed, mother. I don't think I've ever seen a much more one afloat. It was a good thing that I carried Mr. Deering over to the island, for his brother died a short time after we reached the lighthouse."

"I am very sorry to hear that," said the little widow sympathetically.

"His name was Rodney Deering, and he has left a little girl of fourteen for his brother to look after."

"Then the poor child is an orphan?"

"She is. Her mother died about ten years ago."

"It is fortunate she has this uncle who is willing to take charge of her."

"Yes, mother. He's pretty well off, I guess. He is a Boston merchant."

"The change from the island to a comfortable city home must prove advantageous to the child, though of course she is bound to miss her father. Sit up to the table now and eat your breakfast. Everything is ready and waiting. I dare say you are hungry after your sail."

"I should say I am. The sea air is uncommonly bracing this morning, and puts a fine edge on a fellow's appetite. Besides, I've got to return to the island as soon as I can."

"To bring back your last night's passenger and the little girl, I suppose?"

"Probably so; but I've got to carry the undertaker and a coffin over with me, after I have notified the lighthouse inspector of the district that Rodney Deering, who was the head keeper of the light, is dead. By the way, mother, Mr. Deering promised me \$20 for last night's trip after he saw how rough the weather really was. He looks on it as a great favor that I was willing to carry him over in such a gale."

"Twenty dollars will come in very nicely at this time."

After breakfast he called on Mr. Mold, the village undertaker, and told him he had a job for him.

"Why, who's dead, George?" he asked in some surprise.

"The head keeper of the Coffin Island light. I'll take you over to the island in my boat after a while. You'll want to take a coffin, of course."

"What size man is he?"

"Now you've got me, Mr. Mold. I couldn't tell you because I didn't see him. I should think he was about the average size."

"I'll take a box over, and fit him with a casket after we bring him back. Who pays the expenses?"

"The man's brother, who is over at the island now. He's a Boston merchant."

"All right," replied Mr. Mold. "When will you be ready to start?"

"Probably in about an hour," replied the boy.

"I'll be ready for you."

George had the address of the lighthouse inspector of that district, and he sent him a dispatch notifying him that Rodney Deering had died early that morning. The undertaker and his assistant carried the box to the Gull.

"I'm afraid your boat is too small to fetch that box back with the corpse in it in the way it ought to be carried. Can't you get a larger boat?"

"Well, there's Captain Mason's sloop. Perhaps I can induce him to take us over."

The boy went to Captain Mason's house and found that he was willing to go over provided there was something in it for him, and that George helped work the craft, as his son and assistant had gone to a neighboring town. Stanton

agreed, but before they set off he got his father's revolver and placed it in his hip pocket, so as to be prepared to defend himself in case Jim Redmond was looking for trouble. They reached the island about half-past ten o'clock and the undertaker and his helper carried the box at once to the lighthouse. Redmond was nowhere to be seen. Mr. Deering told George that the assistant light keeper had been hunting about the rocks ever since he (Stanton) left the island.

Stanton proposed that while the undertaker was getting the dead man ready for removal they go down to the spot where the lost wallet lay and see if they could recover it. Mr. Deering agreed.

"Do you think you can locate the spot?" he asked, with great interest.

"I marked it with a pile of stones. It is not far to the right of the wharf."

The stones were found just as George had described them. He moved them and disclosed a crevice in the rock, at the bottom of which the wallet could be seen. The fissure was too narrow for a person to insert his arm, so George told Mr. Deering that he would have to go down to the sloop and get a boat-hook that he had seen on board. In a few minutes he returned with the article and tried to probe the wallet out. This was no easy job to accomplish, and their attention was so much absorbed in the work that they did not observe the cautious approach of Jim Redmond, who had been on the watch behind a rock ever since the sloop made fast to the wharf.

"I don't know whether I can get it out or not," said George, after he had failed a dozen times. "It's a most exasperating job."

"Let me try," said Mr. Deering.

The boy resigned the boat-hook to him, but his efforts were not rewarded with any degree of success. Finally he gave it up and the young boatman took another try. At the second attempt George succeeded in catching the point of the hook in the rubber band.

"I've got it," he said triumphantly, and with the use of a little dexterity he brought the wallet to the surface. "There you are," he said, holding it out to Mr. Deering.

Before the gentleman could take it, Redmond dashed forward, snatched it from the boy's hand, and dashed away across the rocks with a derisive laugh.

CHAPTER VI.—What the Parchment Revealed.

The unexpected appearance of Jim Redmond took Mr. Deering and George completely by surprise, and for a moment they could only stare after the fleeing rascal, then the young boatman recovered his self-possession and started in pursuit. He was as active as a young monkey on his feet and Redmond soon saw that he was being rapidly overhauled.

"I'll lead him away to the eastern end of the island and then put his nose out of joint," muttered the scoundrel, as he sprang forward from rock to rock, with an occasional brief glance over his shoulder at his young pursuer.

The rascal relied upon his greater strength to overcome the boy at the proper moment, then with the parchment again in his possession he intended

to get away from the island in a small boat belonging to the lighthouse, which was tied down at the wharf. Stanton followed on Redmond's heels with the dogged resolve to wrest his wallet from him at all hazards. He was thoroughly aroused against the fellow's perversity in trying to do the daughter of Rodney Deering out of what rightfully belonged to her alone. Redmond presently struck a path that carried him down to the shore and out of sight of the lighthouse. The boy was close at his heels when he turned a projecting rock and disappeared. As Stanton himself rounded the rock he found Redmond crouching behind it ready to attack him. The rascal struck George a stinging blow alongside of the head which staggered him, and immediately followed up his advantage.

George saw that he would not be in it with this burly rascal if he once got his hands upon him, so he dexterously evaded a hand-to-hand conflict by leaping aside. Then he picked up a stone and fired it at Redmond. The missile took effect on his shoulder, partially disabling his right arm, and wringing from him a howl of pain and fury.

"I'll kill you for that, you little monkey!" he roared, stooping down to retaliate on the same lines.

"Drop it!" commanded George, coolly, displaying his revolver and covering the man. "Drop it, or I'll put a ball into you."

Redmond straightened up surprised and discomfited at the appearance of things.

"Turn that gun away, will you?" he snarled. "It might go off."

"If it goes off it will be your lookout," returned the young boatman.

"What do you want me to do?" growled the rascal.

"Throw that wallet to me or I'll put a ball through your arm," cried Stanton, in a determined tone.

"You wouldn't dare," blared the rascal.

"Wouldn't I? I'll give you three seconds to do as I tell you. One—two—three!"

Redmond sullenly refused to comply, whereupon instead of aiming at the fellow's arm Stanton fired apparently directly at his head. The ball whizzed so close to Redmond's face that he dropped the wallet with a howl of fear and started to run.

"Stop!" shouted the young boatman after him.

He emphasized his command with a second bullet, which brought the villain to a terrified pause.

"Now," said George, after picking up his wallet and advancing on Redmond, "hand out Rodney Deering's red pocketbook, or I promise you the third bullet won't miss you."

Redmond glared furiously at his antagonist, but the revolver was an all-powerful persuader, and he slowly and reluctantly produced the dead man's property and threw it on the ground with a curse.

"You can go now," replied George, coolly, after taking possession of the wallet.

He watched Redmond take his way along the shore, then he started in the opposite direction up the path by which he had come, and soon reached the top of the rocks, whence he could see the lighthouse again and the advancing figure

of Howard Deering, who had heard the pistol shots and was much concerned for the safety of the brave boy.

"Thank heaven you are safe!" exclaimed Mr. Deering, when he came up and grasped the young skipper by the hand. "What were those pistol shots I heard?"

"They were fired by me," replied George.

"By you?"

"Yes. I brought over my father's revolver this trip, for I feared that I might have occasion to use it to defend myself against Redmond. Well, it came in handy. I came upon the rascal under the bluff, where I guess he expected to do me up, and I compelled him not only to give up my wallet, but also your brother's pocketbook. Here it is," and the boy handed it over to Mr. Deering.

"You are a boy in a thousand," exclaimed the merchant. "I did not expect to get that pocketbook unless I succeeded in rounding that man up with the help of a constable."

While he was speaking George was taking the parchment out of his own wallet. He tendered it to Mr. Deering.

"No one would think to look at that bit of paper that it was worth taking care of," said the boy. "And yet Redmond has made several strenuous efforts to get it and hold on to it."

The merchant contemplated the soiled, creased and ancient-looking document with much interest.

"It must be pretty old," Mr. Deering said, thoughtfully: "No one sees any such material nowadays to write upon. It was considerably used a hundred years ago by those who could buy it, scarce and dear as it was."

He unfolded the bit of parchment with due care, George watching the operation with intense interest. The piece of parchment was blank.

CHAPTER VII.—From Shoreham Village to Boston.

"Why, there's no writin' on it," cried the young boatman in some astonishment.

"It is certainly very singular," said Mr. Deering, gazing blankly at the paper. "The writing must have faded."

"Then the parchment isn't worth all the trouble it has caused us."

"Apparently not. It is an interesting relic, however, and as such I will keep it. Possibly some chemist might be able to bring out the writing again, for the ink used in olden times was more substantial than our modern article. Still I have no great faith that what was once written on this piece of vellum will ever be revealed."

Thus speaking, the merchant refolded the bit of parchment and returned it to the red pocketbook.

"Let us return to the lighthouse and help Flossie get her things in order for taking away," said Mr. Deering, placing the red wallet in an inner pocket of his coat.

Half an hour later George and Mr. Deering carried Flossie's small trunk with all her worldly possessions down to the sloop, where the box containing her father's remains had already been

conveyed. Jim Redmond did not appear until he saw that they were on the point of taking their departure, then George observed him walking toward the lighthouse. In the offing a government tender was to be seen heading toward the island from the direction of Boston. With Stanton's assistance the captain of the sloop hoisted the mainsail and subsequently the foresail. The ropes which held her to the wharf were then cast loose and she glided away from the island under a fair breeze. Flossie and her uncle sat on the extension roof of the cabin, with George Stanton, while Captain Mason steered. Undertaker Mold and his men remained forward with the box.

"I am very glad to have met you, Stanton," said Mr. Deering, when the boat was well upon her way. "I don't think I could have got another skilled boatman to have taken me to the island last night. Therefore, I feel that it is due to you that I was enabled to see my brother before he died. The sum of \$20, which I promised you, scarcely expresses my sentiments, so I shall insist in making it \$50."

"No, sir. I cannot take so much from you for my services. I am perfectly satisfied with \$20."

"Now," continued Mr. Deering, "if there is anything I can do for you hereafter, I hope you will communicate with me," and he handed the lad his business card. "I suppose you do not intend to remain permanently in such a small place as Shoreham. A boy of your evident abilities ought to seek a wider field of usefulness."

"I should like very much to get a start in Boston, or some other large city," said George, voicing the desire that was nearest his heart.

"Nothing is easier, if your mind is set in that direction. I will be glad to make an opening for you in my office. I am about to make some changes that will necessitate my taking on new help. I am arranging to open a branch establishment in New York. I am going to send my chief clerk on there to act as resident manager. He will probably take a couple of the other clerks with him. Their places will be filled by promotion, which will naturally create several vacancies at the foot. I should be glad to have you step into one of them."

"I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Deering. If I can get my mother's permission for me to go to Boston I will gladly accept your offer."

"I will speak to your mother myself, if you wish, and point out the undoubted advantages that would accrue to you by getting a proper start in the world. I should think she would have no great objection to moving to Boston herself. There are many nice places to live in the suburbs of the city, and the electric cars afford quick and satisfactory communication with the business center."

When the sloop arrived at her wharf George Stanton piloted Mr. Deering and his bereaved niece to his mother's cottage. Mrs. Stanton received her visitors with all courtesy and proceeded to make their brief stay as pleasant as possible. She prepared a nice dinner for them, and during the meal Mr. Deering opening up the subject of the young boatman going to Boston and taking a position in his office. While Mrs. Stanton was obliged to admit that Shoreham

offered comparatively no inducements for an ambitious boy, she seemed loath to consider the proposition of moving to a Boston suburb.

She had been born, brought up and married in Shoreham, and she protested that no other place would satisfy her as well.

"I can understand that feeling very well, Mrs. Stanton," replied Mr. Deering; "but remember you must consider your son's future. The world wants just such bright and energetic boys as your boy George is, and it is doing him an injustice to bury him in this antiquated village."

This was putting the matter right up to her in a way that she could not very well evade, and so she promised to think the subject over, at the same time thanking the merchant for the interest he was taking in her son.

At five o'clock a buggy was brought around to the cottage to take Mr. Deering and Flossie on to the next town, where they would catch a train for the city, a wagon conveying Rodney Deering's body in a casket, enclosed in a plain box, to the station.

"I shall expect to hear from you in a few days, Stanton," said the merchant as they were about to part. "At any rate I shall keep a place open for you."

That night after tea George and his mother had a serious talk about his branching out in life, but no decision was reached. A day or two later Mrs. Stanton received a letter from her only sister, a widow, in which the latter said she had decided to move to Shoreham, so as to be near her, and asked her to look up a small cottage for her and her two children. This letter suggested a plan to George.

"Mother, why don't you have Aunt Bertha come and live with you? Then I could go to Boston, and you need not leave Shoreham at all. I could run down once a week and remain with you till Sunday night. The distance is not far. Don't you think that such an arrangement would solve the whole difficulty?"

"But I don't like to have you away from me for a whole week at a time," objected the little widow, stroking her son's hair. "I should miss you dreadfully."

"I must do it some day. Why not now, when such a fine opportunity has presented itself," he said, putting one arm lovingly around her. "Remember you are not really losing me. Boston is only a short distance from here, and you will know that I am in good hands when I am with Mr. Deering."

Mrs. Stanton, like all fond mothers, hated to part with her only son, even under such exceptionally favorable circumstances; but in the end she yielded to his solicitations. And so ten days later George Stanton became office boy for Howard Deering, and took up his home with a respectable family in East Cambridge, not far from where Mr. Deering lived himself.

CHAPTER VIII.—George Stanton's Experience As Office Boy.

Howard Deering was general sales agent for a big hosiery mill in a Massachusetts factory town, and his salesrooms and counting-house was in the

heart of Boston's busiest district. His trade had grown extensively in the last few years, as the product he controlled became more and more in demand throughout the country. He had just established a branch in New York, with a full line of stock, where heretofore he had only maintained a small sales office with samples on exhibition. Mr. Deering had taken a great liking for George Stanton. He saw that the boy had the making of a smart man in him, and he determined to push him ahead as fast as circumstances permitted.

George, being naturally obliging and even-tempered, soon made himself popular with his associates. There was one exception, however, as always seems to be the case in a big office. This exception was Phil Redmond, the brother of Jim Redmond, with whom Stanton had had the run-in with on Coffin Island.

The trouble was Redmond was something of a fast young chap. He associated with a pretty rapid crowd, and had acquired a number of extensive habits that obliged him to scratch hard to make ends meet. As a matter of fact, ends did not meet with him and were getting further and further apart every day. Just why Redmond took a seated dislike to George Stanton would be hard to explain; but the fact remains that he did. He was continually finding some fault with the bright office boy. Fortunately for George, Redmond was not such an important factor in the establishment that he could do the boy any great harm. Flossie, who took her place in Mr. Deering's household just as if she had been his own daughter, developed a habit of coming to the city on a Saturday afternoon and dropping in at the office to see George. Phil Redmond, as soon as he found out that she was Mr. Deering's niece, tried to make himself particularly agreeable to her; but somehow or another Flossie did not fancy him for a cent, and she made no secret of her feelings on the subject, much to the bookkeeper's disappointment and annoyance, for he prided himself on being irresistible with the fair sex. The clerks soon began to notice Flossie's partiality for Stanton's society, and then they began to twit him about her. Of course they did not know that he met her once, and sometimes twice a week at Mr. Deering's home. George took their fun good-naturedly, and after a while they got tired of roasting him. It was different with Redmond. He resented the boy's familiarity with Flossie, the more particularly because he could not help seeing that she liked George better than any one else. He made remarks about their intimacy to his fellow clerks in a way that showed he was jealous of the office boy.

"Mr. Deering ought to know about it," he remarked one Saturday afternoon, when Flossie was talking to George, while he was copying some letters at the press for the cashier. "He wastes a whole lot of the boss's time with that girl every Saturday. Look at him now. He's been fifteen minutes monkeying over that letter-press and chinning to her. It ought to be stopped."

"I don't know that it is any of our business, Redmond," replied the bookkeeper he was addressing, who was very friendly toward Stanton. "It's up to Mr. Deering to find it out for himself. He's got eyes."

"Oh, he's up to his eyes in business these days. He doesn't see all that's going on out here. How could he, when he's in his private office most of the time?"

"That's all right, but there isn't much that escapes him, just the same," nodded the other bookkeeper in a conclusive way.

The appearance of Mr. Deering in the counting-room at that moment caused a cessation in the conversation between the two bookkeepers. They both noticed that though he looked directly at Stanton and Flossie, whose heads were close together at the moment, he passed them by without a word.

CHAPTER IX.—Detecting a Crime.

Time wore on and George Stanton was promoted from office boy to an under clerkship. Stanton had been a year in Mr. Deering's employ when he was transferred from the main room to the cashier department. Stanton continued on friendly terms with all the clerks except Phil Redmond. He and Phil never spoke except when business compelled them to, and then their intercourse was of the briefest kind. George was now eighteen and Flossie had developed into a lovely miss of fifteen. One day Flossie appeared at the counting-room unexpectedly about half-past twelve. She had been shopping on Tremont street, and the idea had occurred to her that she would run down to the office and get George to take her to lunch. Stanton was in his den, as he called the cashier's enclosure, and Flossie came to the little window and peeped through at him.

"I see you," she exclaimed, with a merry laugh.

"Goodness! Is that you, Flossie?" said George. "I didn't expect to see you to-day."

"Didn't you?" she replied, roguishly. "Well, I thought I'd give you a surprise."

"You've done it for a fact," he answered, putting his hand through the window and shaking her little gloved one. "I'm awfully glad to see you."

"Are you, really?"

"Don't you know I am?"

"Well," she said, cocking her head demurely on one side, "I'm not telling everything I know."

"That's a very wise resolution," he laughed.

"Are you very busy?" she asked.

"Why do you ask that question?"

"Because I want you to take me out to lunch."

"You didn't come all the way from East Cambridge just to ask me to take you to lunch, did you?" he grinned.

"Of course not, you foolish boy! I've been up in the retail district shopping. I thought I'd sooner lunch with you than go alone into a restaurant, so I just came after you—there!"

"You have certainly done me a very great honor, Flossie," said George, smilingly; "but I'm not sure I can get off right away. Mr. Richards, the cashier, usually goes to lunch before me, and he hasn't started yet."

"Then I'm going to ask him to let you go first to-day. I'm sure he'll oblige me."

"That would hardly be fair to take advantage of his good nature."

"But I want you to go now," she persisted with a little willful pout, for she was now accustomed to have pretty much of her own way with her Uncle Howard, who had grown very fond indeed of his dead brother's child.

"Here's Mr. Richards now. I'll speak to him."

Stanton stated the case and the cashier told him he could go to lunch then. There happened to be no one in the counting-room at that moment but Phil Redmond. He looked unusually tired and haggard, as if he had been up all night. There was a restless, hunted look in his eyes, too, that seemed to indicate that his mind was ill at ease.

Flossie went into her uncle's private office to wait for George. She left the door, which commanded a view of the cashier's enclosure, open. Stanton went to the lavatory to tidy himself up, for now that Flossie was going to eat with him, he expected to patronize a more tony restaurant than the little one he was accustomed to go to.

The cashier remained in the enclosure engrossed with his duties. At this juncture the telephone bell rang. The office boy, who was eating his frugal lunch in the neighborhood of the booth, answered the ring. After hearing what the voice at the other end of the wire wanted, he told the person to hold the wire, and started for the cashier's pen.

"Mr. Richards," said the boy, "there's a man on the 'phone who wants to see about an important order which he says has not been delivered according to promise. Mr. Deering is not in, so I guess you'd better talk to him."

"I guess I had," replied the cashier, coming out of the enclosure and slamming the wire gate after him.

The gate to the enclosure was provided with a spring catch, which always held it secure, so that the cashier was obliged to use a key to let himself in. This was a necessary precaution during business hours, as Mr. Richards frequently left his den for one reason or another, leaving his safe open and his money-drawer in the desk unlocked. Of course there was not much danger that any one but Stanton, whose desk was within the enclosure, and who also carried a key to the lock, would attempt to enter the cashier's domain. On this occasion Phil Redmond was looking directly at the cashier's enclosure in a dreamy kind of way when Mr. Richards slammed the door to, as we have seen.

For some reason or another the catch on this occasion did not grip as usual, and the door swung open an inch and remained so. Mr. Richards, being in a hurry to reach the 'phone, did not notice what happened, but Redmond did, and a peculiar alert expression sprang into his eyes.

He glanced about the empty counting-room and listened for a moment intently. The coast was clear apparently. The fact of the matter was, Phil Redmond needed a certain sum of money badly.

At that moment there was apparently no one about to see him, and by a little agility he felt he could reach the cashier's money-drawer and get away with whatever money was in it at the time, which he believed would amount to more than enough to help him out of his scrape. Casting another sharp look around the counting-room and feeling reassured, he darted over to the en-

closure, pulled open the gate, reached out to the cash drawer, opened it and grabbed a big pile of bills he saw there. He thrust them into his pocket as he retreated and closed the gate softly. This time the latch caught all right, and Redmond returned to his desk in guilty triumph. Redmond thought he had abstracted the money from the cashier's drawer unperceived, but such had not been the case.

George Stanton's eye had been on him from the moment he entered the enclosure till he withdrew with the money in his fist. The way it happened was this: George, after washing up and brushing his hair neatly, had entered Mr. Deering's private room by a side door to notify Flossie that he was ready to go out. Flossie had left the door facing the cashier's den partly open. Stanton happened to take up his position at the proper angle to command a view of the enclosure, and accidentally casting his eyes in that direction at the critical moment, had seen Redmond's guilty act, and for a moment was too amazed to move.

He could scarcely believe the evidence of his eyes, so utterly unprepared was he for this discovery of Redmond's crookedness. But he recovered his self-possession in a moment.

"Excuse me a moment, Flossie, I want to see the cashier," he said, and hurried toward the telephone booth.

Mr. Richards was too busily enraged at that moment to be disturbed, and Stanton waited for him to come out to impart to him the astounding revelation. While he was waiting Phil Redmond got his hat and started to leave the office. George detected his purpose in a moment.

"He mustn't leave the office with that money on him to dispose of or I shall never be able to prove that he took it," he breathed, as Redmond passed outside of the counting-room enclosure.

The resolute boy therefore hurriedly followed the thieving bookkeeper. As Redmond turned the outside corner of the counting-room partition, Stanton glided up behind him and laid his hand on his shoulder. The bookkeeper turned as if stung by some venomous insect, and his guilty conscience showed in his face.

"What do you want, Stanton?" he asked in shaky tones, as soon as he recognized the boy.

"I want that money you took from the cash drawer a moment ago," he replied, sternly.

"What do you mean?" quavered Redmond, his face turning a shade paler.

"I mean just what I said. You stole into the cashier's enclosure just now, and helped yourself to all the money you could grab."

"You're a liar!" snarled Redmond, taking a step toward the office door.

"I'm not a liar, for I had my eye on you all the time."

"How could you, when there was not a soul in the counting-room?"

"You forget the door of Mr. Deering's private room. That was partially open and I was in there with Miss Flossie."

"Blame you! Take that!"

Redmond, white with fury, struck the boy a heavy blow in the face, knocking him down, and attempted a dash for the door. Stanton, how-

ever, recovered himself in time to grasp the rascal around the waist and a desperate struggle ensued.

CHAPTER X.—Sweethearts.

The struggle outside the counting-room immediately attracted notice, and both the cashier, who was leaving the booth at the moment, and Flossie, ran out to see what was the matter. A policeman who was standing in the corridor outside also ran in to investigate the disturbance.

Redmond has fastened his hands on Stanton's throat and was trying to choke him into releasing his hold upon his person. The combatants swayed about, each desperately bent on accomplishing a certain purpose. As soon as Flossie recognized that George was one of them, and that he was seemingly getting the worst of the encounter, she screamed and rushed to his assistance. The officer, however, stepped in ahead of her, and grasping Redmond's two hands, tore them away from the boy's neck.

"Don't let him get away," gasped Stanton, as he sank back exhausted and panting for air.

"Oh, George! Dear, dear George!" cried Flossie, throwing her arms impulsively about his neck and bursting into tears. "What has he been doing to you?"

Stanton offered no objection to her embrace, but he made no reply, for he could scarcely speak. At that exciting moment Mr. Deering entered the office. He was astonished at what he saw, and of course wanted an explanation. Redmond, after making an ineffectual struggle to get away from the policeman, gave up the fight and stood sullenly awaiting his fate.

"What's the meaning of this, Redmond?" asked the cashier, clearly surprised at the situation, while Mr. Deering also showed his astonishment in his eyes.

The bookkeeper made no reply, since he had none that would stand muster. Then it was that Stanton, releasing Flossie's arms from his neck, made his charge.

"If you will search Mr. Redmond you will find a bundle of money on his person which he took from your cash drawer."

"Impossible!" ejaculated Mr. Richards. "How could he reach the cash drawer? I was only away from the enclosure a moment, and the gate was locked."

"Nevertheless I saw him pull open the gate, steal into the place and grab a bunch of money. He cannot deny it."

"Is this true, Redmond?" demanded Mr. Deering, sternly.

The bookkeeper was silent, but his face admitted his guilt.

"Look into your drawer, Mr. Richards, and see if the money is missing," said the head of the house, quietly.

"There is no occasion to do that," sullenly spoke up Redmond, putting his hand into his pocket. "I admit my guilt. There is your money," and he held the roll of bills out to the cashier, who mechanically accepted it. "I suppose I shall have to go to jail for this, so the sooner it is over with the better."

"Why did you take that money, Redmond?" asked Mr. Deering, more in sorrow than in anger.

"Because I needed the money."

"Are you so badly off you must steal?"

"I am," replied the culprit, gloomily.

"Walk into my office, Redmond. I'd like an explanation of this matter."

"I have none to give you. I have ruined myself, and that is all there is about it."

"I'd like to talk with you at any rate. I am very sorry that this has occurred. I did not expect it of you after your many years of service in my office."

Redmond uttered a reckless little laugh, glared savagely at Stanton, and then followed his employer into the private room.

"I suppose I had better remain, hadn't I?" suggested the policeman.

"I think you had," replied Mr. Richards. "I should be glad to hear your account of this unfortunate affair, Stanton," he added, turning to the boy.

George made his statement, which, of course, was very brief.

"I can't understand how Redmond opened that gate," said the cashier in a perplexed tone, "unless he has been contemplating this crime for some time and had a key made to fit the lock."

"Are you sure that you shut the gate when you went to the phone, sir?"

"I am positive that I did. I remember hearing it slam behind me."

"Then he must have had a key," said the boy.

"I'll show you how I slammed the gate," said the cashier when he and George returned to the counting-room.

He opened the gate with his key and then shut it to as he had done when he was called to the booth. Then to his surprise the mystery was unraveled, for the gate failed to catch and remained open one inch on the rebound.

"That accounts for it. We must get a locksmith at once, for the lock is evidently out of order."

Mr. Deering called the officer inside, told him he had decided not to press a complaint against his recreant bookkeeper, and dismissed him with a \$5 bill. Phil Redmond never returned to his desk. He was quickly dismissed from his position, and another clerk was promoted to fill his place. Mr. Deering told Stanton and his cashier to say nothing about the affair, but to leave the other clerks to believe that Redmond had resigned of his own accord.

The matter having been thus permanently disposed of, Stanton took Flossie out to their belated lunch, and he did not fail to tell the blushing girl how much he thought of her for making that effort of coming to his aid. Stanton was rather glad than otherwise that Phil Redmond was out of the office, because he had long since given up the idea of ever getting upon a friendly footing with the bookkeeper. Flossie was also pleased to think he was gone, because she did not like his face. None of the office force regretted his departure, because nobody liked him much. So, on the whole, he was not missed even a little bit.

Flossie's unpremeditated demonstration that day in the office had duly impressed Stanton with the cheerful idea that the girl really thought a

good deal more of him than appeared even on the surface. He hoped this was true, as he had come to think a good deal of Flossie himself, and young as he was he had built air castles concerning the future in which the charming little miss figured conspicuously. Things went along in the office very nicely now as far as Stanton was concerned.

He seemed to be growing smarter and brighter every day, and Mr. Deering was correspondingly well pleased. Thus another year passed away and George, now eighteen, was trying to coax the down on his upper lip into something that faintly resembled a mustache. Flossie had also advanced another year on the road of life, and was now sweet sixteen. Stanton continued to call on Flossie at least once a week with unfailing regularity. On one of these occasions he learned to his dismay that he was about to lose her for a time. Flossie imparted the intelligence, with tears in her eyes, that Uncle Howard had arranged to send her to complete her education at a well-known boarding school for young ladies, situated fifty or sixty miles from Boston.

"Isn't it too mean for anything that I shan't be able to see you at the office any more after next week," she said, with a little lump in her throat.

"But that isn't the worst of it. You won't see me Thursday nights any more after next week," said George, soberly, feeling as if life would not be worth living.

"Will you miss me?" she asked, her pretty eyes filling up.

"Will I? You can just bet I shall. You are the one friend I think the world of, and when you leave Boston I shan't care much whether school keeps or not."

"Do you think so much of me as all that?" she asked, wistfully.

"I think more than that of you," said Stanton, stoutly. "I like you next to my mother. I like you just as much as if you was my real sister. Don't you wish you was my sister?"

Flossie was going to utter yes when it suddenly occurred to her that another girl in that case would be sure to take him away from her some time, and she didn't feel as if she wanted to give him up at all.

"You must write to me once a week, Flossie," he said, after they had talked the matter over a little while, "and I'll write twice a week to you."

"I'll write twice a week, too," said the girl eagerly, smiling through her tears.

"Maybe you won't have time to do that, so I'll only ask you to promise me one letter a week, but that one I'll expect."

"I promise," she replied; "but you'll write me two, won't you?"

"Sure I will."

"As I'm going away a week from next Monday, you come and see me Sunday, and Tuesday, and Thursday and Sunday again. Will you?"

"Of course I will."

Before Stanton went away that evening he said that on the whole he was glad she wasn't his sister. That he'd much prefer to have her for his sweetheart. Would she be his sweetheart?

Flossie blushed, smiled and said she would. Then George kissed her, said she was the finest

little girl in the world, and that they would be sweethearts as long as they lived.

CHAPTER XI.—The First Round of the Ladder of Fame.

George Stanton felt like a fish out of water after Flossie had departed for the boarding school. Mr. Deering soon observed the change in the boy, and he decided to carry out a plan he had in view for some weeks. His New York office had been growing more extensive in its operations, and the manager had requested additional help. What he particularly wanted was a clerk familiar with the financial end of the business, so the merchant called Stanton into his office one day and asked him how he would like to go to New York as cashier of the branch office. This was an unexpected and important advancement for the boy, and he was taken quite by surprise.

"I should like to go very much, sir, if you think I am competent to fill the position satisfactorily," replied George.

"I haven't any doubt about that whatever," said Mr. Deering. "Well, we will look upon the matter as settled. You had better write to your mother about it at once. When you go down to Shoreham on Saturday you can remain a week and then I shall send you right on to your new duties."

Mrs. Stanton did not like the idea at all of having her son go so far away as New York, but as the die was cast, and the change too important for the boy to miss, she yielded to the inevitable.

Two weeks later George Stanton reached the metropolis of America and gazed upon the skyscrapers and other wonders of the big city for the first time. He went to board with a very nice family in Harlem, near One Hundred and Twenty-fifth street, and it was not very long before he began to feel quite as much at home in his new surroundings as he had in East Cambridge.

He soon got acquainted with some very congenial young men who lived in his neighborhood, most of whom were members of a select social club that had rooms on Seventh avenue. He was proposed as a member and duly accepted. The Manhattan Social and Literary Club soon developed a political bias in favor of a gentleman well known in the district who was a candidate for nomination for the Board of Alderman. The club gave an entertainment once a month, every other one of which, being a "stag" affair, went under the name of a "smoker."

It was at one of these "smokers" that the name of the gentleman who had the office "bee in his bonnet" was brought forward, eulogized and a resolution introduced and carried that the club support him in the event of his receiving the nomination.

This was Stanton's first insight into politics, and thereforward he became very much interested in the outcome of the matter. Finally the gentleman in question received the nomination, whereupon the club members got busy to help secure his election at the polls. Stanton was of very little use in that direction, as he was a com-

parative stranger in the district, and such people as he knew were friends of the candidate. But there were other ways he could help along the good cause, and as he proved both a willing and enthusiastic worker, he made himself well liked in the club. He was introduced to the candidate, with whom he had the honor of shaking hands, and from whom he received words of thanks and encouragement. He received invitations to attend "smokers" given by other clubs, generally purely political in character, some of which he accepted. At a grand ratification meeting, held at the rooms of the district headquarters, he listened to the first political speeches he had ever heard in his life. This style of oratory rather fascinated him, and he was easily induced to accompany a party of friends who had volunteered to visit different sections of the district in an express wagon, rigged up with painted cloth signs, and a couple of gasoline torches and "speil" for the club's Aldermanic candidate. Stanton wasn't expected to make any remarks himself, as he had not been coached in the campaign issues, but he had charge of literature, and was relied upon to see that none of the naughty street boys who favored the opposition tore off or disfigured the candidate's lithograph.

He listened very intently to the speeches made by his friends and other more important orators that were occasionally introduced, and soon was letter-perfect in all the important points advanced by the party whom the aldermanic nominee represented. A few days before election there happened to be a dearth of speakers on the express wagon, and Stanton volunteered to help fill the awkward void. He was permitted to do so, and his first political speech surprised not only himself but the two club friends who were on the cart with him.

"You're all the good, Stanton," was the verdict of his companions, when he sat down and the wagon started for another corner to hold forth to a new audience. "You've got the issues of the campaign down fine. Who coached you?"

"Nobody," replied the boy. "I've kept my ears open and took in all I heard you fellows and the other speakers talk about."

"Upon my word," remarked one of the two, admiringly, "you didn't miss anything of any consequence. If our aldermanic candidate had heard you put it all over his opponent he would have been tickled to death. You've got a fine voice, right, old fellow. It's a pity we didn't have you on the stump from the start-off."

They put him forward at all the other stopping places so that he made six speeches that night.

After that Stanton spoke the remaining nights of the campaign, and was highly complimented by various professional speakers who heard him.

On election day he was appointed as one of the "watchers" at the polls, and it was noticed

that he proved to be one of the most earnest and consistent workers for the organization that supported the club's aldermanic candidate. He carried the results of the election district at which he had served to the clubrooms where the candidate received the "returns."

It seemed a pleasure for him to report that in that district the candidate had a clear majority of

the votes cast. Finally about midnight, when it became clear that their man had been elected, a procession was formed, headed by a band of music, which had been engaged as soon as it became evident that things were coming their way, and that the alderman-elect at the head of the line, and the club members and other enthusiastic partisans walking behind Stanton and his associates paraded the principal streets of the district and made Rome howl for a couple of hours, at the end of which the successful gentleman "set 'em up" for everybody. The election was now a thing of the past and politics was relegated to the background once more in the club, but Stanton did not forget his small elocutionary triumphs, and resolved to be there with both feet the next time his services should be called upon. In fact, politics had in that brief time acquired such a fascination for him that he joined the regular district organization, at the suggestion of the captain of his election district. During the winter the organization, to keep the interest of the voters alive, gave monthly "smokers" at which entertainment was provided by professional vaudeville talent, interspersed by three-round bouts by clever amateur boxers, some of whom aspired to pugilistic honors. George never failed to attend these affairs, and at the last one he was induced to get upon the platform and make a speech on the political situation generally. This was his first notable effort in that line, and he acquitted himself with such general satisfaction that he was recalled to say a few words more. Many of the prominent politicians of the district were present on the platform on this occasion, and they were so favorably impressed with his oratorical powers that they made a note of the fact with the view of using this budding Demosthenes when the occasion presented itself. The leader of the district had Stanton introduced to him and he in turn made the boy known to the other big lights, and it was generally admitted by the knowing ones that the lad was a comer. Before spring came around every voter in the district had either seen or heard about young Stanton, and he had actually become quite popular, although he was unaware of the fact. When he entered the organization clubroom of a night at least half of those present nodded to him in a familiar way, while the leader and his aides always had a pleasant word to exchange with him. His attractive personality had of course a great deal to do with this popularity. He had such a sociable way about him and seemed such a good listener when any one was airing his private sentiments that no one could fail to like him. During all this time Stanton gave great satisfaction to the manager of Mr. Deering's New York office. He attended strictly to business during office hours, never made mistakes, and was considered the star clerk of the branch.

He maintained a regular correspondence with Flossie, who often bewailed the fact that he was so far away from her. They met, however, during the Christmas holidays, George and his mother being guests at the Deering home for a week, and a very happy time the two young people had together renewing their vows of eternal constancy."

CHAPTER XII.—Stanton Becomes Captain of His District.

In the latter part of the month of May Stanton received a letter from the leader of the assembly district asking him to call at his house. Wondering what the big politician wanted with him, George made the visit.

"I should like to have you accept the captaincy of your election district, Stanton," said the leader. "I find that you are a smart young fellow, well up in local politics, and by long odds the most popular person in your immediate neighborhood. What do you say?"

"What's the matter with Murray, the present captain?" asked George.

"He has just handed in his resignation. He is going out West."

"I hardly think I am equal to the responsibilities of the position. Besides my business——"

"This won't interfere with your regular business in the least. I can guarantee that. We want men for captains who are well liked, and who show some energy in handling their districts. You have been recommended to me by several of the members of the Manhattan Social Club, with which you are connected. But I may also say that I have had my eye on you for some time as a promising young man of my district who deserves to be encouraged. I wish you to understand that our organization appreciates and rewards such services as you have already rendered us."

"But, sir, I have had no experience as a captain."

"That's all right. Murray will take you in hand and put you next to all that you require to know. Then it will be up to you to make a good showing. You will receive all the help from me that I can render. You will, of course, be handicapped by the fact that your district shows a majority in favor of the opposition. This majority was at one time much greater than it is now. Murray succeeded in cutting it down somewhat, and I have no doubt but that you will do even better. At any rate I have decided you are the man for the place, and I want you to accept it."

"Will you give me a little time to consider my answer?"

"Certainly, if you insist, but I shall be much disappointed if you turn the offer down."

"I will let you know inside of a week."

"Very well. I shall be at the General Committee rooms next Wednesday at eight o'clock. Let me have your reply then."

"Very well, Mr. Partridge."

The first thing George did was to call on Murray, the present captain, and have a talk with him. He wanted to find out just what would be expected of him, then he would be able to figure as to whether he thought he would be able to fill the bill or not.

"Oh, you won't have any trouble at all, Stanton. I'd take it if I was you. It will give you a standing with the organization and help you to a job if you ever want one. The leader himself has got to treat his captains well if he expects to keep at the head of the district. Par-

tridge is liable to have a contest at the next primary in September, and it isn't impossible but he may be turned down. It all depends who goes up against him."

"Well, let me know what I have to do as captain."

"Sure," replied Murray, who then proceeded to outline the more important things an election district captain has to look after.

"Partridge will take you around to the Harlem Police Court and introduce you to Magistrate Dunne. It's handy to know him sometimes when one of your voters gets into a little difficulty that lands him at the station and he is afterward brought before the court. For instance, the other day Janitor McNulty, of the Bensinghurst Apartment House, in my district, laid a man out with a club, and the fellow had him arrested and swore he'd put him through. But he didn't. McNulty sent for me to come to the police station. I found him in a cell and had a talk with him. On his own showing the case looked a little difficult of adjustment; but I wasn't discouraged. I had a talk with the sergeant at the desk, and he assured me McNulty was sure to go up the river. That didn't seem encouraging, did it?"

"No," admitted Stanton.

"Well, after I had got hold of all the facts, I called upon the chap whose head had been opened up and found him in a very bad humor indeed. I talked to him a while and finally convinced him that it would be to his interest not to press the complaint. I assured him that McNulty had a good pull and would get off with a fine. Instead of having the city collect the fine, which I thought would be about ten dollars, I suggested that he accept that amount and an apology from McNulty and call it off. He agreed, and so next morning when the janitor was brought up in court he was discharged at my request because the man was not in court to maintain the charge."

George grinned at this little story, and thought Murray was quite a diplomat in his way.

"As captain you will have a little patronage to dispose of in the way of appointing two election inspectors, a poll clerk and a ballot clerk. These little jobs are much sought after by persons who wish to evade duty, and cannot conscientiously swear that neither they nor their wives are not worth more than \$250, either in personal property or real estate. Then on election day you will employ six or eight helpers to stir up lazy voters, and attend to such other work as you will find necessary for them to do. On the night before election the leader will furnish you with funds necessary to cover these expenses. Some captains hold out a part of this as a personal perquisite; but I never do, as I always find uses for the whole of the money. The captains are not asked for an accounting, for it is presumed the money is spent as intended."

Murray told Stanton a lot more on the subject, and the boy went home with his head full of details and pointers, all based on the present captain's personal experience in the district. Stanton on the following evening consulted with many of his club members, and they all advised him to take the captaincy if he had a real leaning toward politics. So on the following Wednesday night he went around to the General Committee

rooms at eight o'clock. Leader Partridge had not yet arrived, but the secretary of the organization had a confidential talk with him and seemed to be much pleased that he had decided to accept the captaincy on trial. Partridge didn't show up till nearly nine. There was a mob of small political heelers and others waiting to buttonhole him, and it was some time before George got a chance to speak with him. At length Partridge called him over and asked him what decision he had arrived at.

"I'll accept your offer conditionally, sir."

"All right. What are the conditions?"

"That if I find I can't handle the district as well as I think I ought to you will accept my immediate resignation."

"I don't think you'll have any trouble making good. Have you seen Murray?"

"Yes, sir."

"He put you up to the ins and outs of the job, didn't he?"

"He did."

"He didn't say anything to discourage you?"

"No, sir."

"Come into the office."

Stanton followed the leader into his sanctum, where the secretary had his desk, and our hero was duly enrolled as captain of the — election district of the — assembly district, the appointment to take effect in a few days. Thus George Stanton took his first step up the political ladder, which eventually was to prove a ladder of fame to him.

CHAPTER XIII.—On Nahant Point.

On the first of August Stanton was twenty and he received a three weeks' vacation. He went directly to Shoreham and spent the first week with his mother. The other two weeks Flossie expected him to spend in her society at the Deering cottage at Sandwich Beach, Nahant, on Massachusetts Bay. Although George had had little to do with boats for three years, he had not forgotten his old time skill in handling a sailboat.

The Gull had been leased to a fisherman during its young owner's absence, but the boy easily obtained possession of her for a fortnight's use, as he intended to sail over to Sandwich Beach in her, and use the craft for little excursions with Flossie as the chief, if not sole, attraction.

As Mrs. Stanton had also been invited to spend the balance of the season at the Deering summer cottage, she prepared to accompany her son on the Gull.

"Well, mother, are you all ready?" asked George at nine o'clock on Monday morning, as he came downstairs with his suitcase in his hand.

"Yes, my son," she replied. "You may carry that small trunk down to the boat, and by the time you return I will have my bag ready."

Fifteen minutes later the Gull left her wharf and headed for the point. An hour and a half later she was off Coffin Island, with its gray lighthouse shining in the morning sunshine. It was nearly noon when they passed to the south of Deer Island and entered the big bay. The wind had been so light that it had taken the Gull more than two hours to sail about seven miles.

"At this rate it will take us half the afternoon to reach the beach," said George impatiently. "I guess we'd better pipe to lunch, mother. What have you got in the provision basket?"

"Some sandwiches, a small pie and a piece of cake, with a bottle of milk."

"All right. Spread 'em out on the half-deck. I'll tie the tiller so as to keep her head to the wind and then we'll lunch. This is like old times. To say the truth, although I haven't been out here in three years, and that's a good long time, it seems as if it was only yesterday that I put in at Swamscott to escape a heavy blow, because I was loaded down with fish and didn't want to lose any overboard."

About one o'clock the breeze freshened; much to the boy's satisfaction, and the Gull made a dash for Sandwich Beach, which was in plain view. Nahant is a bold promontory connected with the mainland by narrow ridges of sand and stone thrown up by the ocean. It was once the most fashionable watering-place in New England, but after the destruction of the big hotel on the point the tide of pleasure-seekers went elsewhere, largely to Swamscott. The Deerings liked Sandwich Beach because it had all the advantages and none of the disadvantages of a summer resort. The long beach was hard and smooth, shelving gently and with a splendid surf. The picturesque cottages and villas gave it a gay appearance. It was three o'clock when the Gull pulled in at a wharf, and George made her secure. It was but a short walk from there to the Deering cottage, and the two visitors were received by their friends with open arms. George and Flossie took a short walk together, and finally joined the afternoon bathers. After disporting a short time in the very light surf they dressed and reached the cottage in time to dress for dinner. After the meal every one sat out on the veranda until it began to grow dark, when George and Flossie once more wandered off together. This time their stroll led them toward the rocky bluff, which rears its head 150 feet above the level of the bay.

"Do you know, George, it seems ages and ages ago that I first saw you on Coffin Island," the girl said, as she clung to the boy's arm.

"Why, it's only three years."

"They are three very long years."

"They haven't seemed so long to me. I was remarking to mother, while we were eating our lunch within plain sight of this beach, that it appeared almost like yesterday when I was last sailing in these waters aboard the Gull. Then I was merely an every-day boatman with no prospects. Now I hope I am on the highroad to fame and fortune."

"Why, are you really looking forward to becoming famous some day?" she asked, with a smile.

"Why not? I think it's a great thing to make a name for yourself as well as mere wealth. I should like to be something above the average. For instance, if I could become President of the United States, it would suit me very well indeed."

"Why, the idea!" and the girl gave utterance to a rippling laugh. "Do you really aspire as high as that?"

"Well, I believe in aiming high; then maybe

you may hit something worth while. For instance, if I found it unattainable to get myself elected President I shouldn't turn up my nose at a Governorship. If that was out of my reach I wouldn't refuse to become a Senator if the position was offered to me."

"And if you couldn't get that?" she asked roguishly.

"I'd take anything I could get to begin with, of course; but in the end the office of a United States Senator would be what I should covet."

"Then you'd have to live in Washington."

"For a part of the time, yes. I suppose that would suit you, wouldn't it?"

"Me! Why, what would I——"

"You'd have to live where your husband did."

"My husband!" she exclaimed in some confusion.

"That's what I said. I thought it was understood between us that you were going to marry me some day. Have you changed your mind?"

Flossie blushed and looked down on the sand.

"Are you sure that you really want me to?" she asked softly.

"Say, Flossie, how many times do you want me to answer that question? Nearly a year ago, a few nights before you started for your boarding-school, I told you that you were the only girl in the wide world that I cared for. I meant it, just as I mean it now, and as I shall mean it a year or a dozen years for that matter, from now. Of course if you want to back out you've a right to do it. If you've seen some fellow you like better than me——"

"But I haven't, George," Flossie protested, with burning cheeks.

"Well, I'm glad to hear it, for I shouldn't care a rap whether I lived or not if you went back on me."

"I'll never——"

She broke off with a suppressed scream as two men suddenly jumped out into the path before them from behind the shelter of the rocks at the extreme end of the point which they had unconsciously reached. The actions of the two men were decidedly menacing. That, coupled with the fact that this spot was the most lonesome at that hour in all Nahant, made the encounter particularly unpleasant.

"What do you want?" demanded Stanton, drawing back and pulling Flossie behind him.

"Whatever you've got about you," replied the foremost stranger roughly.

The voice sounded strangely familiar to his ears, and he peered through the gloom at the speaker.

"Is this a hold-up?" he asked coolly.

"You can call it what you please. Hand over your money and other valuables, or we'll make things mighty unpleasant for you and the lady."

"I think we've met before, and that your name is Jim Redmond," said Stanton, not at all dismayed by the threatening aspect of the situation.

The man uttered an oath.

"Who are you?" he snarled, taking a step forward and seizing the boy by the arm.

Stanton shook his arm off.

"It makes no difference who I am, but it will

make a whole lot of difference to you and your associate if you don't sheer off and leave us alone."

"Show a glim, Phil, and let's see who this chap is," he said sharply.

The speaker's companion struck a match, and as the light flared up Stanton recognized not only Jim Redmond, but his brother Phil also. Both of them looked to be in pretty hard luck. The flash of the match also served to bring George's face, and Flossie's, too, into bold relief for an instant.

George Stanton and Flossie Deering, by all that's lucky!" exclaimed Jim Redmond, with something like a note of triumph in his tones.

CHAPTER XIV.—The Triumph of the Redmonds.

As the match flared out and the gloom of night enveloped the four figures once more, Jim Redmond grasped his brother by the arm and held a whispered consultation. Stanton, paying no further attention to the intruders, drew Flossie's arm within his own and started to leave the spot. But they had barely taken a dozen steps before Jim and Phil Redmond followed with rapid strides and placed themselves in a position to cut off their retreat. Stanton, seeing that they meant mischief, prepared to defend himself and Flossie. He was a strong and stalwart youth, and was confident he would be able to beat off both of these men in a hand-to-hand conflict unless they were armed, and he did not think they were.

"Stand back!" he exclaimed in a determined tone. "If you lay a hand on either of us it will be at your own risk."

"You talk big, young fellow," laughed Jim Redmond tauntingly; "but you'll find that wind don't go down with us. We both owe you a grudge of long standing. You did me out of a fortune and my brother out of a job and a wad of money. Now the time has come when you've got to square up, see?"

"You ought to have been grateful that Mr. Deering did not prosecute you for robbing his brother of that red pocketbook. In any case it would have done you little good. The piece of parchment which you thought so valuable amounted to nothing, for there was no writing on it."

The man laughed mockingly.

"It was of value to me. Perhaps Deering has saved it as a curiosity; if so, he can hand it over to me with a few bones that we need in exchange for his niece."

"What do you mean, you rascal?" cried Stanton angrily.

"I mean that now, we see a chance of getting hold on the old man we're goin' to make the most of it. This young lady will go with us and stay with us till her uncle antes up the parchment and a thousand plunks. Then we'll let her go. As for you we'll let you off this time so you can carry our message to him, and you can thank your lucky stars that I've changed my mind about layin' you out."

On hearing these words Flossie clung in terror to her companion's arm.

"Don't be frightened, Flossie," whispered George reassuringly. "These rascals shan't molest you as long as I can prevent it, and I fancy they'll have their hands full trying to polish me off."

The gaunt and haggard appearance of the Redmond brothers had given the boy the idea that they were not as formidable as they looked, and consequently he believed he was a match for them both. But Stanton underestimated his opponents, as he presently discovered to his chagrin. Their desperate situation, and the prize they saw within easy reach nerved the two rascals to complete their purpose at all hazards. While Phil Redmond advanced to secure Flossie, Jim Redmond closed with Stanton. The girl uttered a thrilling scream, while George made a plucky fight in her defense. Phil dragged Flossie away from her young protector, clapped one hand over her mouth to stifle her cries, and then bore her off out of sight around the bluff. Stanton, furious at the success that seemed to be attending the scoundrels, fought with all the energy he was capable of, beating Jim Redmond almost to a standstill and preventing him from making his escape. But at the moment victory was in his grasp his foot slipped on the damp rocks and he went down head foremost, striking his forehead a blow against a sharp rock that partially stunned him. Jim Redmond, his face puffed and bleeding from the pummeling he had received, took instant advantage of the opportunity thus afforded him, and when Stanton pulled himself together a minute later his antagonist had disappeared.

"The rascals!" he muttered, as he got upon his feet and wiped the trickling blood away from his forehead. "They've carried Flossie off. But they shan't escape me as long as I have breath in my body. I'll follow them and wrest her from their grasp at every hazard."

He knew that Jim Redmond must have followed his brother around the bluff. That was their only safe path to escape observation for the time being at any rate. But by following close upon their heels he did not see how they could ultimately make good their escape, burdened with their fair prisoner.

The fact that they might have a boat at hand quite escaped him. The boy hastened to follow what he judged to be the track taken by the villains. He jumped from rock to rock and sped across little patches of sand until at last, after rounding the bluff, he came in sight of them again. They were standing close to the water's edge, and one of them was bending down and seemed to be pulling on something. As Stanton dashed forward, with blood in his eye, he saw that Jim Redmond had the painter of a rowboat in his hands, while his brother was in the act of stepping into the boat with Flossie in his arms. The girl had ceased to struggle, and from the position of her head, which lay inertly upon Phil's shoulder, it was apparent she had fainted. With a shout of anger, George rushed at them. Jim turned his head at the moment, and seeing how near Stanton was, he gave the boat a shove off, waded out a few feet and sprang into her. Then

seizing the oars, he began to row toward a small sloop that lay a short distance out upon the throbbing waters.

"Come back, you scoundrels!" shouted the boy furiously dashing into the surf as though he had a mind to swim after the boat.

A mocking laugh from Jim Redmond, that was echoed by his brother, was the only response he received. It would have been a vain and foolhardy attempt for George to have made any further effort to overhaul the boat, for she was now a dozen yards from the shore, in deep water, and the sturdy arms of Jim Redmond was rapidly widening the distance. He could only stand there, almost up to his waist in the boiling surf, and watch the abductors of Flossie glide up alongside the sloop, lift the unconscious girl on board and follow themselves. Jim attached the rowboat's painter to a cleat on the stern-rail, while his brother carried Flossie into the small cabin, where he left her and returned to help Jim haul up the sails. They then both went forward and lifted the anchor by means of a small drum windlass, when the sloop's head fell off, and she drifted away under the influence of the tide and light wind.

As soon as the anchor was on deck, Jim went to the tiller and put the craft on a course that would carry them up along the northern shore of Massachusetts Bay. Stanton groaned as he watched the sloop gather headway, and finally disappear in the gloom of the night. He saw that the rascals had the best of him, and that he was powerless to interfere further with whatever iniquitous project they had in mind.

"My heavens!" he ejaculated, almost despairingly. "To think those two rufians have Flossie in their power. How she will suffer when she comes to her senses! Can I do nothing to rescue her? Nothing to defeat the villains?"

Suddenly, like an inspiration from heaven, an idea flashed across Stanton's brain. His boat was at the wharf a mile below. She was an unusually fast craft for her size. He would follow the Redmonds in her. Fifteen minutes later he jumped on board the Gull, cast loose the sails, hoisted them and cast off from the wharf. Then he headed the sailboat for Nahant Point.

CHAPTER XV.—The Chase of the Sloop.

When Stanton finally weathered the point he didn't believe that the Redmonds were more than a couple of miles ahead of him. He followed the same tack he had observed them take, at approximately the same distance from the shore. The wind was so light that George fumed with impatience, since the Gull made very little headway as the moments dragged slowly by.

"The folks must be wondering what has become of Flossie and I," thought the boy as he struck a match, looked at his watch and noted that it was nearly eleven. "I'm sorry now that I didn't delay long enough to send a note to Mr. Deering, briefly explaining matters. Well, it cannot be remedied now. They won't see anything of me again until I fetch Flossie back with me."

After midnight the breeze freshened a bit, and

the Gull made better progress. The sloop, however, had the same advantage, the only question being which boat covered the most water. All night long Stanton sat with the tiller in his hand, every once and a while straining his eyes into the night in the hope that he might catch sight of the chase. The gray light of morning at last began to lighten up the sky, and George now became more alert than ever. A thin mist lay upon the surface of the water, which prevented the boy from making anything out at a greater distance than fifty or sixty yards. At a little before five the sun peeped above the distant watery horizon, and the mist began to melt and scatter under its warm rays. The first thing Stanton saw was the shore about half a mile away on the left; then as the seascape broadened he made out the sloop he was in quest of. She was a mile and a half ahead, and half a mile further out. The possibility that he might be mistaken in his identity was small, as she showed a new white patch on her mainsail, a mark he had particularly noticed as she got under way off the point. George seised the tiller and went down into the cabin to get a small telescope which was strapped to the forward end of the cuddy. Returning with this to the cockpit, he levelled it at the distant sloop, and then all doubt was set at rest, for he easily recognized Jim Redmond seated at the tiller. Phil Redmond was not in sight, so the boy guessed he was taking a snooze below. There were quite a number of four-and-afters to be seen in different directions, most of them making directly for Boston. Jim did not seem to pay any attention to the Gull, which was trailing him, as he had not the slightest suspicion that Stanton was a foot nearer than Nahant at that moment. Thus an hour passed by and the two boats, under a better breeze, were drawing closer to each other, which showed that the Gull was easily the faster craft.

The wind continued to freshen since sunrise, and at seven o'clock the sailboat had cut down the space between her and the sloop by half a mile. The Gull was now going along at a lively pace over the sparkling water. Though a little spray broke over the half-deck at times, not a drop came as far as the cockpit. The wind was abaft the beam and the sail hardly needed any attention. There was a short boathook, which made a formidable weapon in the hands of a resolute person, lashed under the seat which circled the cockpit, and George cut it loose so as to have it at hand for instant use. His intention was to run alongside the sloop, board her and trust to luck to do up the Redmonds. It was a risky proceeding in light of the odds against him, but he was in that mood that nothing short of a couple of loaded weapons pointed directly at his head would have caused him to waver in the part he had marked out for himself. At eight o'clock the sloop was less than three-quarters of a mile from the Gull, and George noticed that Jim Redmond cast frequent glances at her, though he appeared as yet to have no suspicions as to her true character. By peeping under the boom once in a while George was able to note what was going on on board of the sloop. Presently he saw that Phil had come on deck and was eyeing the sailboat intently. The sloop was still half a mile

in advance when Stanton, taking another look at her, saw Flossie step out of the cabin and look around. Phil went up to her presently and spoke to her, pointing toward the cabin. Flossie objected to going below again, and kept her eyes on the Gull, which it was possible she had identified, as she had sailed in the boat with George many times. Phil went up to his brother and spoke to him. Then Stanton noticed that Jim altered the sloop's course so that she began to stand out to sea. That move compelled Stanton to disclose his true colors. He moved the tiller over and pointed the Gull's bow directly for the chase. Of course, the Redmonds discovered at once that they were being followed, and they showed considerable excitement. Flossie, too, took a sudden interest in the proceedings, and began to wave her handkerchief at the Gull. The new point of sailing proved to be advantageous to the sailboat, and she closed in very fast now on the sloop. It wasn't long before the two boats were within speaking distance of each other. The Redmonds now were able to make out Stanton at the tiller of the pursuing craft, and Flossie made that pleasing discovery at the same moment. Phil grabbed Flossie and tried to force her below, but the girl was equally determined that she would not go down into the cabin again, for she put up a strenuous fight against it, struggling with all her might against the man. Phil could easily have overcome her if he had wanted to be rough enough, but he was evidently afraid to hurt her, for fear of future consequences, so he soon found he had his hands full in trying to get her down the short companion-way. In some way, when the Gull was within fifty feet of the sloop, Flossie managed to escape from Phil's grasp, and then she jumped on to the roof of the cabin and ran forward. Phil looked after her a moment, and then, evidently making up his mind that she must be recovered and secured below, whether she would or not, he leaped on the cabin, too, and started for her. Flossie uttered a scream when she saw him coming, and finding herself cornered deliberately sprang overboard as he reached out to grab her.

"My gracious!" cried Stanton, in dismay, heading the sailboat directly for the spot where she had gone down, and grabbing up the boathook. The sloop, with the aghast Redmonds, flew on her way without making any attempt to come about to her rescue. Flossie came to the surface a few yards ahead of the Gull, and with wonderful presence of mind she began to swim for the sailboat. Stanton threw his boat up into the wind, and as she drifted toward the girl he held out the boathook toward her. When it came within her reach she grasped it, and George drew her close to the side of the boat, so that he could reach her with his hands.

"Let go of the hook now, Flossie; I've got you safe," he said, catching her by one of her arms.

She obeyed obediently. Then with both his arms he drew her, dripping like a nymph of the waters, into the cockpit. She threw her arms around his neck and sobbed out:

"Dear, dear George!" and fainted dead away.

The sloop containing the Redmond brothers continued on its way out to sea.

CHAPTER XVI.—Two Hearts With But a Single Thought.

With the Gull to look after, and an unconscious girl on his hands, Stanton was in a quandary. He allowed the sailboat to drift and attended to Flossie. By chafing her hands and temples and dashing a tin cupful of water into her face, he succeeded at last in bringing her to her senses.

"Now, Flossie," he said at last, "you will get cold if you stay out here in your wet clothes. Go down into the cuddy, remove all of your garments and cover yourself up in the blankets of one of the bunks. You'll have to stay there till we get back to Sandwich Beach, which won't take long in this smacking breeze."

"Yes, George; but do tell me first how you managed to overtake that vessel."

Seeing that she was determined to know all about her rescue before she went into the cuddy, Stanton gratified her curiosity in as few words as possible. Flossie then went into the cuddy, he shut the slide over until she had had a reasonable time to take off her dripping garments and turn into the bunk, and then he opened it up again to give her plenty of air. George could dimly make out her head from where he sat at the tiller, and they managed to carry on a conversation, though both naturally had to speak in a louder key than ordinary. It took about two hours for the Gull to run up the coast to Sandwich Beach. There was quite a crowd on the wharf when the boy ran the sailboat in and made fast to the inner side of the pier. George wrote a brief note to Mr. Deering and sent it over to the cottage by a messenger. In a short time, Mr. and Mrs. Deering and a servant, with a bundle of clothes for Flossie, came down to the wharf and went on board the Gull. While Mrs. Deering was in the cabin attending to Flossie, George told Mr. Deering the story of their thrilling little adventure.

"The miserable scoundrels!" commented the Boston merchant, with considerable feeling. "To abduct our Flossie in that high-handed manner. You're a plucky boy, George, and you have placed us under a debt of gratitude we shall not forget. We were up all night in a state of anxious suspense over your and Flossie's absence. When the Gull was reported missing from the wharf we naturally thought you had taken Flossie out for a sail, and we felt somewhat relieved until midnight came and you did not return. As the wind was very light we believed you had got almost becalmed off shore; but still we were very anxious as the hours went by and there was no sign of you. After sunrise this morning we became thoroughly alarmed when the two men we had sent on the bluff to look out for the sailboat returned with the word that she was nowhere in sight. We could not understand it, and I telegraphed up and down the coast—over to Swampscott, down to Marblehead and other nearby places in my eagerness to obtain some trace of the Gull. Well, thank heaven, everything is all right now; but we have had a great shock."

"By the way, Mr. Deering, what have you done with that piece of parchment that was in your brother's red pocketbook?"

"It is still in the wallet in my house safe. Why do you ask?"

"Because Jim Redmond was going to include that in the price of Flossie's ransom."

"Of what use would it be to him? I suppose he thinks, as we did at first, that it contains some secret writing."

"I told him that the parchment was no use, that it was entirely blank; but he laughed, as if that fact did not disturb him. Do you think there is some secret about it that he is acquainted with, but which you and I could not see through at the time we examined it?"

"It is possible. I will re-examine it carefully when I get a chance, and see if I can make anything out of it."

"It would be a good idea, sir, for I think there must be something in the parchment, after all."

Flossie and her mother now came out of the cuddy, and the entire party started for the cottage. Next day Mr. Deering went to Boston in the little excursion steamer and swore out a warrant against the Redmond brothers for abduction. It was three weeks before they were caught by the detective, who spent that time searching for them. They were jailed and subsequently brought to trial, when Stanton had to come on from New York to appear against them. The jury found them guilty of the crime and they were sent to the State prison for a term of years. In the meantime George spent a very enjoyable two weeks at Nahant with the Deerings and took Flossie out many times on the Gull. The Sunday night before he left he interviewed Mr. Deering, with Flossie's permission, on the subject nearest both their hearts, and obtained the merchant's consent to their engagement. So he and Flossie were now definitely engaged, with the understanding that their marriage was to come off after three years. He bought his sweetheart a lovely diamond ring in New York when he got there and sent it on to her.

CHAPTER XVII.—Conclusion.

When Stanton returned from his vacation he was enthusiastically welcomed back to New York by all his friends in Harlem. The primary election was coming on and Partridge was confronted with an opponent, a well-known young lawyer, for the leadership of the assembly district; consequently he looked to all his captains to do their best to have him re-elected for the ensuing year. He sent for Stanton as soon as he heard he was back in town and had a heart-to-heart talk with him on the subject. The boy promised to see that he got the majority of the votes to be cast by the party voters in his election district. He kept his word, induced the bulk of those entitled to vote at the primary to come forward and put in a ballot for Partridge, and thus carried his district for the regular leader by an overwhelming majority. Partridge, who was re-elected, complimented his new captain on his showing and thanked him for the earnestness and zeal he had displayed in his interest. At the November regular election George worked hard to keep the Murray voters in line and to add a few more to the total. His success was greater than was looked for, and his services in the party's interest.

were duly lauded at a meeting of the General Committee, on which occasion he was called on the platform and presented with a diamond stick pin as a prize reward in consideration of the fact that his district had made the best showing out of the fifty-three in the assembly district. At the social club election just before Christmas Stanton was elected secretary by a unanimous vote, and assumed the office when he returned to New York after spending the holidays at his home in Shoreham.

Late in the month of May William Miller, the manager of the New York office, was taken seriously ill. As soon as the news was communicated to Mr. Deering he notified Stanton to assume charge of the branch until Mr. Miller was fit to resume his duties. This threw a lot of extra work and responsibility on George's shoulders, but he was equal to the emergency, and business went on with the regularity of clockwork. Mr. Miller returned to the office in season to relieve Stanton for his regular August vacation, but as he was not the same man he had been before his illness, Stanton, it was understood, would hereafter help him out. Partridge, the district leader, had another contest that year at the primaries, and barely held his own, though Stanton worked like a beaver in his interest. The opposition candidate did everything he could to win the boy over on his side, but George was true blue and would not desert Partridge. The leader was grateful to him for his exertions in his behalf and promised to stand by Stanton if the occasion ever presented itself. That November George cast his first vote, and was quite proud that at last he had attained all the privileges of a full-fledged American citizen. At the regular annual meeting of his club he was elected its president by a good majority.

"We'll be putting you up for the Assembly next," said one of the members jokingly to him.

Stanton laughed and wondered if he ever would see his name on a regular ballot. Flossie graduated that year, and Stanton was present, with the Deerings, at the commencement exercises. He sent his promised wife flowers to bury her under. He spent the entire month of August with her at Sandwich Beach this time, and their wedding was set for the middle of December. Mr. Miller having decided to retire permanently from the management of the New York office, Stanton succeeded him on the first of September. Much to George's surprise a movement was developed that year in the district to have him nominated for the Assembly, but he declined to run on the ground that the growing business of the branch office of the hosiery business demanded his constant attention.

In December he was married to Flossie, and they spent a short honeymoon in Florida. Mr. Deering had forgotten to re-examine the piece of parchment which had remained ever since Rodney Deering's death in its compartment in the red pocketbook. When Flossie became Mrs. George Stanton he handed the wallet over to her as a remembrance of her father. One night George came in and found her looking at the blank piece of vellum, which had also slipped his mind. He took it out of her hand, and then told her how Jim Redmond had made such a strenuous effort

to get possession of it at the time of her father's death.

"What could he want with an old time-stained piece of blank paper like that?" she asked her husband in surprise.

"I believe it once contained some writing, and that the ink has faded out for good," replied George. "Once your uncle suggested taking it to a chemist's and seeing if he could revive the ink; but he never carried this idea out."

"Let us experiment ourselves," suggested the young wife. "If sympathetic ink was used, heat may bring it out."

They went into the kitchen and a flat-iron was put on one of the burners of the gas-stove.

After it had become hot enough a thin piece of cloth was placed over the bit of parchment and the iron was applied. They waited the result with some little excitement. In a few minutes the cloth was removed and the vellum was found to be covered with writing. George wrote it all down on a sheet of white paper before the vellum cooled and the writing faded away again. It proved to be explicit directions as to the locality where a barrel of Spanish doubloons had been buried in the sands of a certain cove on the Isle of Pines, about fifty miles off the southern coast of Cuba, in the year 1665.

"This is evidently what your father meant by your fortune, Flossie," said George. "He obtained this bit of parchment from some person who was unable to make use of its secret himself. Strange that your father made no effort to hunt for the treasure, either. It is clear that Jim Redmond in some way found out about this thing and laid his plans to get hold of the doubloons after your father died. To that end he stole the pocketbook before the expected arrival of your uncle should thwart his purpose. Only that I fortunately happened to look through the lighthouse window that night he would have been able to have carried out his design. Well, dear, some day we'll go on a little trip to the Isle of Pines and see whether we can unearth those Spanish coins."

It was two years before the opportunity came for them to carry out this plan. Stanton had just been elected to the New York Legislature, and he concluded to take a winter vacation. So he and Flossie made up a little party for a Caribbean trip, a rich friend having loaned Stanton his schooner-yacht. The barrel of coin was discovered in the spot described in the parchment, and Flossie suddenly found herself worth \$20,000—quite a little fortune in its way. Once in politics, Stanton became more popular than ever. His name was now frequently mentioned in the newspapers, and always to his advantage. Two years later he was elected a State Senator by a very large majority from the Harlem Senate district in which he lived. He has since been re-elected three times, and may be said to carry his district in his vest pocket, so solid is he in that quarter. Still his ambition is but partially satisfied, for he hopes some day to represent New York State in the Upper House of Congress, and we have no doubt but he will get there in time.

Next week's issue will contain "ON THE SQUARE; or, THE SUCCESS OF AN HONEST BOY."

CURRENT NEWS

HARNESSES SUN'S HEAT

Marcel Moreau, of San Francisco, announced he had found a way of harnessing the sun's heat. He declared that, working from experiments credited to Archimedes and Buffon hundreds of years ago, he had succeeded in devising a combination of little mirrors set in a bowl about four feet in diameter, which, when focused through a number of small lenses, would produce tremendous heat from the sun's light. He said he could regulate the heat produced to the exact degree desired.

Moreau claims to have produced with his machine sufficient to melt a diamond and cause it to disappear as gas.

A MOTHER ROOSTER

James Ryan, who was mounted orderly during the World War to Gen. John J. Pershing, and who is now a resident of Silver Spring, Md., is, according to his own statement, the owner of a Rhode Island Red rooster which is essaying the role of a mother to a brood of twenty-two Rhode

Island chicks. The mother was accidentally killed, and the rooster, realizing the predicament of the orphans, promptly began to take the mother's place. Not only does the rooster cover the chicks by night, but hunts food and otherwise cares for them by day.

DOGS IN MOCCASINS

After the first severe freeze at the beginning of winter a band of prospectors working in Northern Canada found themselves on the wrong side of a lake over a hundred miles wide, on the other side of which was the winter headquarters. They were without any means of transportation other than a boat in which was stored all their belongings and provisions. Hiring a halfbreed with his dog team, they put runners under the boat and made their way easily and safely across the smooth miles of frozen water, helping along the dogs by setting a sail on the boat. To protect the feet of the dogs from the hard surface of the ice, small moccasins of buckskin, well padded, were provided for each.

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"THE BOASTER'S REWARD," by Dale D. Kier

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Then there's a fine two-part serial entitled

"WITH EYES AND NOSE"

By RALPH E. DYAR

and a special article by POLICE-CAPTAIN HOWARD exposing the tricks of slick swindlers, entitled

"THE FLIM-FLAM ARTIST"

In addition to all this there are numerous short articles such as "A Bandit de Luxe," "Bomb Explodes in Auto," "The Cashier Didn't Know Her," "Attempts to Hold Up a Policeman," "How Crime Is Bred," "Theatre Thieves" and "Radio Catches a Fugitive."

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Rob and the Reporters

— Or, —

Hustling for War News by Wireless

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER VI.

On The Belgian Frontier.

Sure enough, there was a cruiser bearing down upon them.

"Bless me, Rob, it's enough to give one the creeps, cried Edith, in her lively fashion.

"Why in thunder don't she show her colors?" questioned Walter, as he studied the cruiser through his glass.

"Waiting for us, I suppose," replied Rob. "Edith, do you notice how thick it is off to starboard?"

"It's a fog bank, that's what it is," replied Edith. "See, Captain Tucker has taken the wheel himself."

"Yes, and he is changing his course," declared Walter. "He must think she is a German."

All doubt was dispelled inside of the next ten minutes, when the cruiser ran up the German flag.

She was now within range of the Sterling Castle, which was now running at increased speed.

Suddenly there was a puff of smoke, and a shot came whizzing across the bow.

"You folks better get below," shouted the captain. "That means show your colors, and it's just what I'm not going to do."

"We'll get behind the chart house," called Rob. "If it gets too hot we'll go below."

A second and third shot quickly followed. The second fell short of the steamer; the third struck her amidships, but did no damage.

A moment later they ran into the fog.

It was the last they saw of the German, much to everybody's relief, and it was also the last notable incident of the voyage.

Captain Torrence safely docked his steamer at Liverpool.

"Shall we stick together, Rob, or would you sooner get rid of me?" asked Walter, as they were preparing to go ashore.

"What do you ask such a question for?" replied Rob. "Of course we want you with us, don't we, Edith?"

"Decidedly," she assented. "As long as we are traveling the same road, why not?"

"So they ran up to London together, where they engaged rooms at a quiet hotel near the Strand.

It was late in the day when Rob and his friends reached London, too late to present his letters of introduction, so the evening was devoted to such sight-seeing as could be done.

First thing next morning Rob called upon sev-

eral prominent newspaper men and presented his letters.

He was civilly received, but all save one, a Mr. Barker, assured him that it would be simply impossible for Edith to enter Belgium, adding that war correspondents were not only barred out all along the line, but such as had attempted to force their way to the front had been arrested by the English and French, and in several instances shot by the Germans.

But Mr. Barker took a different view.

"There is only one way for Miss Morley, and that is to run over to Holland in some private yacht," he declared. "As for you and your friend, Mr. Randall, it is possible that I can be of service to you. I will certainly try. I am willing to do anything to oblige Mr. Torrence. Is Miss Morley able to bear the expense of engaging a yacht?"

"Oh, yes," answered Rob. "She is well provided with cash. Can she make her way into Belgium from Holland?"

"Impossible to say. How far is Durelle from the Dutch border?"

"About twenty-eight miles. It is not on the line of any railroad."

"And how does she propose to travel?"

"She intends buying a small car, if one can be had. I suppose it will be impossible to hire one."

"Quite; but she may be able to buy one. Go back to the hotel and remain there. I shall take the matter right up with a certain prominent government official. If he refuses to help it will not be possible for you boys to get to the front."

"I suppose it would be useless to try to take a camera along?"

"Absolutely. You mustn't think of such a thing," replied Mr. Barker, and Rob left, returning to the hotel to report.

It was several hours before Mr. Barker turned up.

"It is arranged," he announced. "I can secure you a yacht and a captain who is willing to take the risk of running you over to Rotterdam; as for the rest, at the last moment you, Randall, will be handed certain dispatches to be delivered to General Taylor of the 5th Army Corps, with a pass for two through the British lines, which will certainly be respected. You go as special messengers from the government. You, Mr. Douglass, had better pose as Randall's valet. As for the rest, it is up to yourselves."

Mr. Barker was warmly thanked, and Edith handed him the money required to pay for the yacht.

The arrangement was for the yacht to sail the first thing in the morning.

A taxi was called, and our party went aboard the Isabel and interviewed Captain Pearson, who dilated at length on the risk they were running.

"We are liable to be blown up by a German mine or captured by a cruiser," he declared; "all the same I am willing to run the risk upon the terms agreed. You better all come aboard this evening. We not only want to get away early but to attract as little attention as possible."

This was done. They slept on the Isabel that night.

(To be continued.)

GOOD READING

BOY OF FIVE CATCHES TROUT AS HEAVY AS HIMSELF

Willie Dorringer is only five years old, but he has been commended for meritorious conduct under extraordinary circumstances. He was with his father, Bill Dorringer, a Glacier National Park guide, when a huge mackinaw trout was caught on a large spoon hook and a trolling line in St. Mary's Lake last summer. Willie and the fish each tipped the scales at the same notch—42½ pounds.

The Bureau of National Parks has no medal dispensing department and it is doubtful if Willie's case comes in the Carnegie hero class. However, Willie was cited by his father for his conduct during the "splashing battle." He obeyed orders like a major, remaining quiet in the boat during the half-hour struggle Dorringer had before he got the monster trout into the boat.

IN THE CONGO WEALTH IS COUNTED BY WIVES

Fresh from the wilds of Africa, Robert S. Hill, a graduate of the South Dakota School of Mines, has arrived in South Dakota for a visit with relatives. It took him two months to make the journey from the interior of the Congo, where he has been engaged in diamond mining. He first went to Africa in 1915, and has spent all his time there since then, except for two trips back to the United States.

He says there yet are some really big chiefs in the part of the Congo where he is engaged who have from 300 to 400 wives and who are real African Kings.

"They used to have the power of life and death over their people," said Mr. Hill, "but that has been taken from them. However, some of them still retain a great deal of their authority."

"In the villages many of the men have several wives. The men do practically no work except a little hunting and fishing, and their wives support them. The only incentive for a man to accumulate more property is to enable him to buy more wives, and his wealth is reckoned by the number of wives he has."

MUCH RUM SMUGGLED

Federal dry agents in the State of Washington last year confiscated, according to official statistics, 6,931 gallons of moonshine and bonded whiskey. During the same period, copying an actual check made by an employee of a Canadian export house, there were smuggled down Puget Sound nearly 20,000 cases of liquor every month.

The whiskey seized by the Volstead men during the entire year, assuming half the total was whiskey, amounted to about 1,200 cases less than one-thirtieth the amount smugglers brought, according to the alleged check, and may yet be bringing into the State every thirty days.

It is now definitely known that much of this illicit liquor comes into the State by way of the hundreds of small rocky islands dotting the waterway between here and Canada. Some of the islands are mere points of rock standing just

out of the water, yet large enough to accommodate a cave for caching liquor. Others are miles in length, with natural caves, dense woods and rivers and creeks up which small boats may navigate.

AGE OF SUN NOW PLACED AT 2 TO 8 BILLION YEARS

The age of the sun has been fixed at something between two billion and three billion years by Prof. Walter Nernst after researches announced at a meeting in Berlin of the Society for Industrial Progress. The estimates are based in part on the rate of decomposition of radio-active elements, and in part on deductions from Einstein's theory of relativity concerning the relation between mass and energy, says the *Kansas City Star*.

Early estimates set the age of the sun as low as ten million years, but geologists showed this was too short to allow for the erosion and other changes observed in the crust of the earth since it became solid. The radio-active decomposition of uranium to lead is a more accurate cosmic clock, and this indicates that the solid crust of the earth has existed for at least one and a half billion years. According to Nernst the sun, while getting past middle age, is still good for 400,000,000 years, after which a crust will form on its surface and life such as we know it will cease upon the earth.

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INTERESTING RADIO NEWS AND HINTS

The capacity of two condensers in series is less than the capacity of the smaller of the two. As the capacity is decreased the wave length will be reduced. The wave length cannot be reduced lower than one-half the fundamental wave length of the antenna by a series condenser.

STATIC

Static electricity often prevails during snowstorms as with lightning storms. Many radio stations have observed static, accompanying heavy snowstorms. The antenna should be provided with a lightning arrester or else it should be connected to the ground through a lightning switch. Either method will protect the set as the static charges are set direct to the earth.

GOOD AERIAL

We would advise the employment of a single wire aerial 100 feet long in preference to two wires of shorter length. In erecting your aerial it is always wise when close to another receiving aerial to try to erect it so that it lies at right angles to the other antenna. This will keep down the interference from neighboring receiving sets. Running your lead in through porcelain tubes is a good idea, and we would advise you to use them, keeping your lead in far away from any obstruction.

The following is one way to make a good variocoupler: Using a three and a half inch tube, the primary should be wound with eighty turns of number 22 single cotton covered wire, while the secondary should consist of fifty turns of the same size wire. The primary may be tapped, while the secondary is left just as it is. The tapping process can be done in this manner: Tap every two turns until the tenth turn is reached. This will give you sufficient inductance to carry you up to at least 600 meters.

AUDIO FREQUENCY AMPLIFYING TRANSFORMER

The rapid reversing of radio frequency currents after having been changed to audio frequency currents by the actions of a vacuum tube may be amplified by the use of a transformer called an audio frequency transformer. To most efficiently amplify radio signals at audio frequencies by means of cascade vacuum tubes amplification it is necessary to couple the plate circuit of one tube to the grid circuit of the next by means of an amplifying transformer. It is generally conceded that a correctly designed and constructed closed core transformer is much better and more efficient than the open core or air core transformer.

IS THE REGENERATIVE SET ON THE WANE?

That is a question which is being asked and asked often these days. With the recent progress in radio engineering it is fair to state that the regenerative circuit no longer occupies an im-

portant position which it did a year ago. Better circuits have been developed, which make for sharper tuning, less distortion, and positively no re-radiation. However, the regenerative circuit has done more to bring about radio broadcasting than any other factor. It was available at the time when there was nothing else that could even be compared with it in point of efficiency. It permitted the construction of simple sets which would bring in radio-phone signals from stations many hundred miles away. It made for loud signals, whereas, heretofore, single tubes produced barely audible signals. Nevertheless, and despite the many ingenious tuners which have been devised of late to give new life to the regenerative receiver, the fact remains that regenerative circuits are being superseded by radio frequency, neutrodyne, superdyne, radiodyne, super-heterodyne, and other circuits.

THE AUTODYNE RECEIVER

In this type of radio receiver a vacuum tube is connected to the circuit in such a manner that it not only acts as a detector of radio waves but also generates rapidly reversing alternating currents. When doing this it is said to be oscillating. By suitable arrangements of the circuit the local oscillations can be made slightly out of tune with the incoming oscillations. As a result the currents combine or overlap each other and an alternating current reversing at audio frequency is obtained. The same tube which produces the local oscillations rectifies the audio frequency currents so that the sounds can be distinguished in the telephone receivers. This type receiver is sometimes called a self-heterodyne receiver.

A SIMPLE DEVICE

Various devices are now on the market which make it possible to connect several pairs of phones into the plate circuit of a tube so that more than one person can listen in on phones.

Some are more or less efficient than others but most of them are comparatively expensive.

A device, however, which will serve the purpose admirably can be made at a cost of a few cents and with very little trouble.

This consists merely of several double-terminals. Fahnestock clips mounted on a piece of bakelite hard rubber or other such material. A strip of hardwood may be used but will not be as good as the composition material.

The number of Fahnestock clips provided should be one more than the number of phones which are to be used. Two binding posts are provided to make connection with the binding posts of the set. If jacks are used instead of binding post connections for phones, the two posts may be attached to the terminals of the phone plug, making it possible to plug the sets of phones into any stage of the set.

Binding post 1 is connected with the A side of Clip 3. One phone tip of phones 8 is connected

with the B end of the double-terminal 3 while the other phone tip is connected with the A end of clip 4. One phone tip of the next pair of phones, 9, is connected with the B end of clip 4 while the other phone tip of the phones is connected with the A end of clip 5. The rest of the phones are connected in the same way.

If on a particular occasion the greatest number of phones which are to be used is three, only four clips, 3, 4, 5 and 6 need be used. If only two pairs of phones are employed only clips 3, 4 and 5 will be needed.

If all four pairs of phones are being used the wire from binding post 2 is inserted into the B end terminal clip of clip 7; if only three pairs of phones are to be in use, the last pair can be taken out by pulling the tips of the clips and the wire from binding post 2 can be inserted into the B end of clip 6; if only two pairs of phones are to be used, the next pair of phones, 10, are taken out and the wire from binding post 2 is inserted into the B end of clip 5 and if only one pair of phones in use the wire from binding post 2 is connected with the B end of clip 4.

Another arrangement makes it necessary to disconnect the phones that are not in use. In this case additional binding posts, 12, 13 and 14, are provided and wires shown by the dotted lines are used to connect the binding posts with their respective clips as shown.

In this case if all the phones are in use, one phone terminal of the set is connected with binding post No. 1 while the other is connected with binding post 2. If only three pairs of phones are to be used, one binding post of the set is allowed to remain connected with binding post 1 but the other terminal of the set is connected with binding post 14, thus leaving the last pair of phones, 11, out of the circuit. If only two pairs of phones are required, the second terminal of the set is connected with binding post 13 while if one pair of phones is desired, the second terminal is connected with binding post 12.

If a phone plug is used in place of phone terminals on the set the wire from one terminal of the plug is connected with binding post 1 while the wire from the other terminal of the plug is connected with the other binding posts of the device depending on the number of phones desired in the circuit.

A ONE CONTROL RECEIVER

The time may be coming when a receiving set will comprise a small cabinet with one dial on the front. This dial may be marked off, not in meaningless numbers, but with the names of the stations it is capable of tuning in. A simple switch, perhaps not unlike the wall switch now used to turn on and off the lights in a room, will open and close all battery circuits required to light the filaments of the vacuum tubes. When this comes about, and it undoubtedly will, any member of the family should be able to operate the set after a minute's instruction.

One control operation is possible now, but the results are far from perfect. There happens to be several separate and distinct functions con-

nected with the operation of the one receiver set, yet seldom are these functions correlated sufficiently to permit of their adjustment through a single control.

One of the receivers designed on the one knob principle is here explained. If the parts in this set are selected with care and assembled properly according to the best radio engineering principles, the resulting outfit will function surprisingly well. But it is far from perfect in its action and, strictly speaking, is not a single control unit. The set depends for its success on the employment of regeneration and the fine control of this action must sometimes be taken care of by moving the resistance which determines the heating of the filament wire.

Then, too, while the receiver will operate properly over a wave length, say of 360 to 450 meters, any attempt to bring in stations on a higher or lower wave length fails, due to the erratic action of the tube. The latter oscillates and stops oscillation with an incomprehensible irregularity, thereby making regeneration and reception to vocal sounds impossible.

In spite of these drawbacks the receiving set is an interesting one with which to experiment. From it perhaps will come one form of one control receiving set.

The parts necessary for the outfit consists of a 75 turn duo-lateral or honey-comb coil, a 43-plate variable air condenser, a grid condenser of .00025 microfarads capacity, a grid leak with a maximum resistance of 10,000,000 ohms, a UV 201A or UV 301A vacuum tube, four dry cells, one 22 volt B battery, a pair of phones and a rheostat.

The coil should be the best obtainable and should be purchased with a suitable mounting of equal quality. Too much money cannot be spent for the condenser. Cheaper ones might do, but their operating qualities are unknown. The A series of tube is selected because of its stability. It is possible to utilize a UV 200 or 3800, but the builder will experience trouble with its general instability.

The rheostat preferably should be one of the type which gives minute adjustment of the current without step-to-step changes. This eliminates practically all wire rheostats, satisfactory as they are for the usual circuit. The pressure type of rheostat is usually successful in this receiver and should be employed if available.

When these parts are assembled there is but one bit of advice to keep in mind. Arrange the parts so that all wires between the instruments will be shortest. If the outfit can be placed in a 7 by 8 cabinet so much the better. And finally to eliminate body capacity shield the inside of the panel with thin copperfoil, making sure before installing shafts and screws that the foil comes in contact with no metal parts except the ground binding post, to which it should be rigidly connected.

After assembling it may be found wise to experiment with the duo-lateral coil, exchanging the 75 turn coil for one of 100 turns or perhaps 50 turns. This is a point which can be decided on only after installation, since the real value of the coil depends on the length and character of the aerial.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

NEW YORK, MAY 30, 1924

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

COLLEGE HAS PRIZE COW.

Grace Koningen, a Holstein cow, owned and bred by the Montana State College, finished a production of 32,280 pounds of milk for the year, which gives her the world's record as a milk producer for ten-year-olds. Besides the world's record the cow holds the State record for cows of all ages for production in milk and butterfat. She also holds the record for being the best cow owned by any State college in the United States.

FISH THAT SHOUTS

Prof. C. H. Greene of the University of Missouri recently described to a number of scientists a newly discovered illuminated fish, whose habitat is Monterey Bay, California. The fish shouts when pursuing its prey.

Each fish, according to Professor Greens, is illuminated with hundreds of phosphorescent lights and, when bearing down on smaller fish, is able to make distracting noises by driving the gaseous contents of its swimming bladder through a narrow membrane from one side to the other.

CANADA WILL EXHIBIT 4,800-POUND SILVER NUGGET

With the object of interesting British and European capital in Ontario's mineral wealth and attracting capital to the Province, Charles McCrae, Provincial Minister of Mines, has arranged an Ontario mineral exhibit for the British Empire Exhibition next year, which he believes will be one of the finest of its kind ever presented. The Government has purchased for exhibition purposes the famous "Keeley silver nugget," which weighs 4,800 pounds. There is \$17,000 worth of silver in the nugget.

DWELLS ON BLEAK ISLE TO STUDY BIRDS

An extremely interesting though lonely six-months is ahead of an English woman naturalist, Miss E. L. Turner, who has just left London to take up her residence on Scolt Head Island, two miles out from the wild and desolate coast of Norfolk.

Miss Turner is marooning herself on this almost unknown and never visited island in order to learn more about bird habits. She has spent years studying birds, but confesses she has gained little real knowledge about them. She is particularly anxious to find out something more about migratory birds, and on this island in the North Sea she will be able to keep watch of their arrival.

There are no houses on Scolt Head Island, and Miss Turner has taken her own tent, a weirdly painted affair which roused some curiosity among the scientists who accompanied her as far as the coast.

"The tent," explained Miss Turner, "is the one from which I believe the British army took the idea of camouflage. I used it in the Farne Islands as a hiding place while watching birds there in the winter of 1914. It became a dirty yellow and could be seen all over the island, so one day I got some green paint for it. The day was windy. I clutched at the flapping canvas and dabbed paint on it as best I could. Then I walked away from it, and, to my astonishment, it became invisible."

LAUGHS

Mistress—But, bless me, why are you leaving us, Mary? I'm sure I do all the work. The General Servant—Yes, ma'am, but I don't like the way you do it.

Mamma—I suppose you find Robbie a rather remarkable boy, don't you? Teacher—Yes. Mamma—In what special study? Teacher—In all. He never knows a lesson in any of them.

"My wife was arrested yesterday." "You surprise me. What was the trouble?" "She got off a trolley car the right way, and a policeman thought she was a man in disguise."

Laundryman—I regret to tell you, sir, that one of your shirts is lost. Customer—But, here, I have just paid you twelve cents for doing it up. Laundryman—Quite right, sir; we laundered it before we lost it.

"Which is the starboard side of a ship?" "Why, don't you know? That's the side where the star boarder has his room." "Then why do they call the other side the port side?" "Because that's where the porter sleeps."

"Oh, dear!" sighed small Harry. "I wish I was a clock." "Why do you wish that, Harry?" asked his mother. "'Cause I wouldn't have to wash my face and hands, then," explained the little fellow.

"What I want," said the young man, "is to get married, and have a peaceful, happy home." "Well," said Farmer Cornloss, "sometimes it works that way, and then again, sometimes it's like j. nin' a debatin' society."

BRIEF BUT POINTED

MICE THRIVE ON BARREN ISLE

Carrington Island, a small piece of land in the Great Salt Lake on which there is an abundant supply of roofing slate, is infested with mice, according to Eli F. Taylor, of the United States land office. A recent visit to the island by Mr. Taylor for survey purposes brought out the tale of the rodents.

There is no fresh water and no other sign of life on the island except the mice, and how they manage to survive is a mystery.

PRODUCTION OF COAL

Wood is to-day being deposited in swamps over most of the earth. The necessary elements required to make coal are an abundance of wood to be submerged, a marsh full of water for the wood to lie in and a supply of mud to cover the wood occasionally to seal it up from decay. Wherever these conditions are fulfilled wood is preserved. The first form it takes is peat. Peat differs from wood in that it is slightly oxidized, but otherwise its structure is unchanged. The second stage of coal is lignite. Here the woody structure is still discernible, but the hardening process has gone further. The third stage is black instead of brown, and woody fossils in it are somewhat rare.

\$918.50 IN GOLD COIN FOUND IN OLD HOME

Speaking of "treasure trove," \$912.50 in gold coin has just been found in a century-old house in Brookville, Ky., and so far the legal ownership has not been established.

While the house was being torn down a tin can containing \$900 in \$10 and \$20 gold pieces was found. The house was occupied by John Lee and family more than fifty years prior to the death of Mr. and Mrs. Lee twenty-five years ago. A church congregation bought the building for a parsonage and lately, desiring to erect a new parsonage, sold the old house.

A. R. Langley, liveryman, bought it. The money was found by his son Hansford. There is much discussion as to the ownership of the money, but Langley has it.

SHELL EXPLODES IN MARBLE RING

With fifty or more boys watching, a dozen other youngsters were engaged in a marble contest in the city playground, Camden, N. J., when, according to the police, Harry Grindorff, fourteen, arrived with a huge loaded shell.

According to the police, Grindorff swung the shell above his head and laughingly said: "I wonder what would happen if I threw this thing into the ring?" He dropped the shell, the police say. It struck the pavement and a terrific explosion occurred.

The marble players and watchers, including Grindorff, were hurled on their faces. Thousands of passersby rushed up, believing a bomb had been set off. When the smoke cleared, Grindorff, John Triano and William Benhof were found lying unconscious.

A fragment of the shell had pierced Triano's

abdomen. Grindorff and Benhof were injured and were taken to Cooper Hospital. The Triano boy is probably mortally injured. According to the police and boys said the shell was bought from a man living in the vicinity of the playground.

COMMA MAKES BIG DIFFERENCE

Winston Churchill is being extolled by his publishers as a paragon of accuracy because he insists on revising four sets of proofs of his forthcoming book, but it would be difficult for any writer to beat the meticulous care with which Thomas Campbell corrected and corrected his poems in the press. On one occasion he actually walked six miles to his printer's and six miles back in order to change a comma into a semicolon, says the *Detroit News*. Doubtless he was justified, for the difference a punctuation mark can make was revealed in the case of one of the best known lines in the English language.

When Gray sent his famous "Elegy" to the printer's the first line read, "The curfew tolls, the knell of parting day." The printer, not understanding the use of "tolls" as an intransitive verb, deleted the comma, so that it read "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day." When the poet saw the line he at once recognized its new sustained melody, and adopted the printer's correction.

LIONS AND LEOPARDS LAY SIEGE TO FARMS

Farmhouses in the bush bordering on the northern Rhodesian frontier have recently been in a state of siege owing to the activities of lions. The animals have come out of the jungle in daylight and attacked the farm animals, carrying off some of them.

In some cases the natives working on the farms have been attacked, and several have been killed. The lions are often joined by leopards and have appeared in such numbers that the settlers are forced to go about only in large groups and to keep a constant guard over their families and stock.

The wife of a railroad employee reports a thrilling adventure in this connection. Mrs. McLean left her home at Garuso on a bicycle to visit neighbors. Reaching a river she found two large lions on the bank. She was so near that she could not retreat and prepared to fight for her life, but at the first shot the animals ran. She then proceeded and shortly came across a big leopard eating an ox. The leopard also made a hasty getaway, but followed Mrs. McLean for some time.

Arriving at the farm she found it had been attacked for several weeks by the animals and many cattle had been lost. Next day she was escorted back to her home by a neighbor and ten natives, who, on leaving Mrs. McLean, found they had been tracked all the way by lions. Mrs. McLean's escape was probably due to the fact that the animals had eaten their fill of oxen.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

A WEST INDIAN SNAKE

Fer-de-lance is the name given by the West Indian creoles to the lance-headed or yellow viper, a large and very venomous serpent of the warm parts of America. It is from five to seven feet long and capable of making considerable springs when in pursuit of prey or some object which has irritated it. Its bite is often fatal; the only antidote of any avail seems to be, as in the bites of other venomous snakes, strong alcoholic drinks. This snake infests the sugar plantations of Brazil and the West Indian Islands, and it is dreaded alike by man and beast. While it possesses no rattle, it is closely allied to the rattlesnake tribe. Its tail ends in a horny spine, which scrapes harshly against rough objects, but does not rattle. A traveler writing on the island of Martinique says: "If by some rare chance you encounter a person who has lost an arm or leg you can almost certainly conclude that you are looking at a victim of the fer-de-lance, the serpent whose venom putrifies living tissue:"

PYRAMID SOLE SURVIVOR OF ANCIENT WORLD WONDERS

Save for one surviving pyramid, the seven wonders of the ancient world have passed on. Not only have they disappeared, but their memory is mostly confined to the pages of old books. Strangely enough, the one surviving wonder is the oldest. It dates back almost 4,000 years before Christ, and it is still in good condition. It is the pyramid of Cheops at Ghizeh, in Egypt. The most notable thing about the pyramid was the care taken to protect it from grave robbers. All the entrances were sealed. There were several large chambers near the base of the structure built to mislead any one seeking the sepulchral chamber. This was 138 feet above the ground and could be reached only by tortuous passages, cleverly concealed, says the Detroit News.

The walls of Babylon were the second wonder. The third wonder was the statue of Zeus in the temple at Ephesus. The fifth was the mausoleum of Halicarnassus in Carlia. The sixth was the Colossus of Rhodes and the seventh was the lighthouse of Alexandria at Pharos. It was Antipater of Palestine, the Baedeker of the ancient world, who selected the seven wonders about 209 years before the birth of Christ.

EARTHQUAKE SHOCKS IN ENGLAND

The quiet countryside of England has been disturbed by frequent earth tremors of increasing violence during recent months. The last series of four quakes in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire was of sufficient strength to upset a score of chimneys and break glass.

The tremors have caused a small panic among the people of the northern counties and they are now living in fear of a more severe shock. Ex-

perts of the British Meteorological Department say that such frequency of tremors has hitherto been unknown in England, and that in the past they have rarely occurred more than once in every eight or ten years and then with but little force. However, it is believed that there is little danger of any widespread upheaval.

The department was warned several months ago by an Italian seismological student that there would be a series of minor shocks felt in England.

Two shocks felt in the south of England consisted for the most part only of a dull noise, followed by a slight shaking, but these are gradually becoming louder and more frequent. The only immediate danger is said to be in the case of deep mines.

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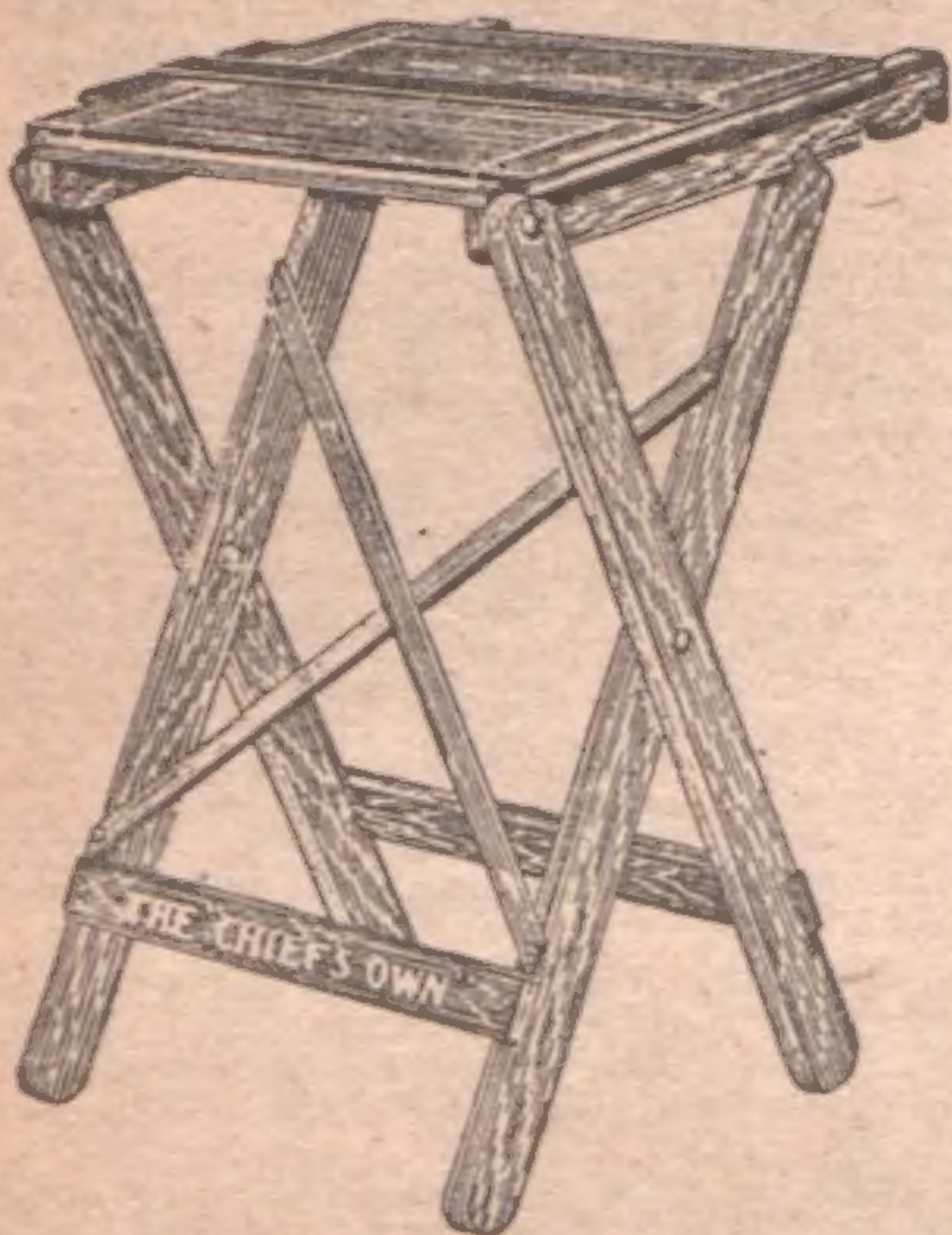
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